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# Skinner vs Freedom, Dignity, & Liberty

**Tibor R Machan**

*Few scientists have caused as much controversy in recent years as Harvard psychologist B. F. Skinner. In such works as his novel* Walden Two *(first published in 1948) and the nonfiction* Beyond Freedom and Dignity, *Skinner has argued forcefully for the widespread use of behavior modification technology as a means of achieving various social goals. Joining the ranks of Skinner critics is REASON Senior Editor Tibor Machan, whose book,* The Pseudo-Science of B. F. Skinner, *will be published in early 1975 by Arlington House Publishers. In addition to teaching philosophy at the State University College in Fredonia, N.Y., Dr. Machan is editor of REASON PAPERS and he edited the highly-acclaimed book,* The Libertarian Alternative *(Nelson Hall Co. 1974). We are pleased to present here, with the permission of Arlington House, a condensed version of Chapter One, which involves a general critique of Skinner's methodology and conclusions. We hope our readers enjoy this preview of Dr. Machan's book.*

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The contention that human beings are free to initiate some of their actions, that they can actually choose some of what they do in their lives, has been attacked and defended throughout mankind's intellectual history. B. F. Skinner is among those who are thoroughly hostile to the idea – he believes that human freedom does not exist. He thinks that believing in human freedom is on par with believing in myths, demons, mysteries: "The hypothesis that man is not free is essential to the application of scientific method to the study of human behavior. The free man who is held responsible for the behavior of the external biological organism is only a prescientific substitute for the kinds of causes which are discovered in the course of a scientific analysis."

He says freedom is outmoded, unscientific, and reactionary. The modern age with its developments in physics and biology should not be cajoled into accepting what after all, is an ancient human superstition. He simply views the tradition of libertarian ideas – into which he lumps any doctrine that invokes notions of choice, liberty, responsibility – as outmoded and prescientific, while claiming advancement, modernity and, of course, truth for his "scientific analysis."

To see if Skinner has any kind of a case we need to consider several of his assertions. To begin with, are the basic ideas of Skinnerism novel while the doctrine of human freedom is ancient?

## FREE CHOICE – ANCIENT OR NOVEL?

If any ideas have some claim to novelty in intellectual history those of human freedom and dignity have a far better chance than what Skinner offers. But in fact germs of both kinds of ideas have been with us since ancient times. While the general belief that demons or other humanly uncontrollable forces governed behavior is ancient, so are the ideas of freedom and responsibility about conducting oneself traceable to practically any age. Indeed we get a mixture of freedom and what is generally called (somewhat misleadingly) determinism in the views of most noted thinkers throughout history. As far as a consensus is concerned, few people would credit anyone for having shown conclusively either the basic independence of human conduct or its full dependence on factors outside of one's own control.

What is more important is not whether there have been germs of doctrines of liberty and thoroughgoing

determinism throughout the ages, but that the latter idea was prominent in the very age Skinner condemns as prescientific. Ancient philosophers such as Democritus and Leucippus argued that everything in the world constitutes an interrelated collection of atoms that must by necessity move along predetermined lines. This is not the complicated and modern determinism of Skinner. But the germs of his idea of human nature are clearly there. Throughout the religious eras when human conduct was tied directly to noble or vicious supernatural forces, the doctrine of determinism, separate from scientific theory, had prominent influence. A sort of "devil made me do it" approach to a great deal of misbehavior lurked behind even the more sophisticated theologies. True, these views did not prevent violent responses to human misbehavior. But it was often accepted, in some very influential circles, that punishment would cleanse the evildoer of his bad influences. The idea of original sin is clearly part of the many suggested explanations for the evil that people do. And original sin means just that all men are moved to do wrong by their inheritance of the characteristics of their ancestors.

So the concept of personal responsibility is not in itself an ancient one – if by this is meant that the notion was prominent throughout premodern times. Quite the contrary, even today the notion is circumvented in most intellectual circles. Instead what people *do* is often attributed to their inherited characteristics, the conditions of their environments, social influences, intervention from the will of supernatural entities, or certain biological conditions which are considered to be a malignant aspect of the entire species.

Skinner maintains that people cannot help what they do, how they behave – not just sometimes but under all circumstances. There are no criminals, he contends, just people whose behavior deviates from some written generalization, norm, or preference. There are no wrongdoers, simply people we label as such (due to our ignorance of the factors which caused their behavior). Wars, riots, crimes, personal disasters, pain, misery, injustice, and the like are *never* caused by people but by their history of reinforcement. Good and bad people alike cannot help being what they are. A recent example: Watergate had nothing to do with wrongdoing, impropriety, negligence, bad judgment, injustice ("obstruction of justice"), or the violation of human rights – the affair simply *had* to come about and was caused by the inevitable chain of events that constitutes the evolution of the universe, the human species, and each individual.

## REDUCTIONISM VS. FREE CHOICE

However, Skinner has not made a scientific discovery to the effect that human beings cannot cause their actions, that they have no choice about what they are doing, that their entire behavior is (must be) caused by factors over which they can exercise no control. Neither has he carried out scientific experiments *with human beings* from which the most sensible generalization has to be that people simply respond to their environment – or even that their response is always, although in complex ways, caused by something over which they have no control.

At best Skinner has demonstrated that *some* animals behave with no evident options on their own part; that they act without the capacity to originate behavior, to make active, creative contributions without being prodded, molded, or stimulated to do so by factors within their environments. Even this is not borne out conclusively by his laboratory experiments without certain unproven assumptions concerning the states of deprivation of various selected members of the animal species under inspection and strict experimental control. As Dr. Richard de Mille explains:

> The furor in the popular press over B. F. Skinner's *Beyond Freedom and Dignity* is the more disconcerting because, when not indulging his grandiose fancies, Skinner remains a notable scientist. Unfortunately, the public has no way to distinguish plausible, limited applications of operant conditioning from utopian schemes and science fiction. But the limits are inherent; by definition, an "operant" is an emitted act, which can be reinforced/conditioned/shaped only *after* it has spontaneously appeared. We have to ask, then, what makes the act appear for the *first* time.

Skinner's own, often useful, contributions to behavioral *science* actually leave room for what could turn out to be human freedom. His concept of the "operant," introduced to supplant the idea of purposive behavior and voluntary activity, does *not* require determinism for all of the affairs and activities of human beings. Operant behavior *could* be free, even if with simple behavior we can identify some cases as stemming from drives, instincts or other fixed and humanly unalterable causes.

Despite this, Skinner demands the requirement of a thoroughgoing determinism that allows for no genuine choice in human affairs. "The hypothesis that man is not free is essential to the application of scientific method to the study of human behavior." But there is no attempt to prove this claim anywhere in Skinner's works. What with the questionable conception of science he offers it can be appreciated why this is so, even if the certainty of the position is severely undercut as a result. The emerging idea then cannot be linked either with what science itself dictates or to the scientific contributions Skinner himself produces. The position to which Skinner clings, mostly by implication but here and there quite explicitly, is most usefully (and in accordance with philosophical parlance) characterized as *reductive materialism.*

The main tenet of this doctrine is that there exists only one kind of entity for science to investigate, appearances to the contrary notwithstanding. And a corollary tenet is that the laws governing the behavior or motion of this kind of entity are those we call laws of mechanics.

*"Skinner thinks that believing in human freedom is on par with believing in myths, demons, mysteries."*

There are powerful objections to the reductionist point of view that should caution a student of human affairs about its adoption and advocacy. Some scientists who accept it admit that it is a faith (perhaps it is based on some desire) and not a stricture based on a rational assessment of the results of scientific investigation. The reductionist position is not the requirement of scientific simplicity, parsimony, or economy. Matters get more rather than less confusing by imposing the reductionist framework on everything. The fact of numerous branches of knowledge and science gives evidence for a hierarchy of not just the kinds of things there are in nature but the laws and principles appropriate to understanding and explaining their behavior. The laws of mechanics are unsuited for purposes of understanding what we find in various areas or realms of reality — not even physics is happy with them in our times.

## ON DENYING FREE CHOICE

But the faith in determinism itself, be it reductionist or not, has other problems aside from its lack of scientific and philosophical support from within the Skinnerian framework. To Skinner, determinism means that nothing human beings do is up to them; that they are in no actual or possible circumstances the causes of anything, including their own behavior. "The mistake . . . is to put the responsibility anywhere, to suppose that somewhere a causal sequence is initiated."

We must distinguish this kind of determinism from the kind used, for example, in the statement, "He was all along determined to become a doctor." In such a case it is an open issue whether the determination was the person's own or had another source. But usually we would assume that the person had taken it upon himself, firmly and with resolve, to become a doctor by strong commitment to a choice. This kind of determinism is the sort that Skinner rejects. He has no patience with theories of self-determination. (Although this does not square with his advocacy that people take it upon themselves to design a culture.)

What then are the flaws in Skinner's universal judgment that nothing we do is up to us, that in whatever activities we are involved, in whatever behavior we are engaged, we cannot help ourselves? First, this claim must be applied to Skinner himself; how could he avoid its application?

Now a person who utters something he cannot help uttering is quite imaginable; people talk in their sleep, for example. And what they say could be taken to be true or false by those who hear them, although the person asleep is hardly in the position to judge.

If we make the condition of the sleep-talker a universal one, such that *by our nature as human beings* we cannot help saying the things we say, could there still be a distinction between true and false statements? Perhaps if some other species of beings existed with the capacity to learn and understand our language as well as to know about the world, this could be the case. Thus, although parakeets can repeat sentences, including the sentence, "Human beings are not free," they are not capable of understanding statements or of establishing whether they are true or false. But Skinner is not a member of a different species, nor are we all parakeets.

The Skinnerian position, however, places us in the camp of constant sleep-talkers or parakeets, claiming that what we say we cannot help saying. Under such circumstances no one can tell what is or is not true. When disagreement occurs and some say "p" while others "not-p," both parties have to have said what they said. To then inquire into whether "p" or "not-p" is true can only result in the further problem of everyone having to say what he will about that. And so forth, *ad infinitum.*

Therefore by the tenets and requirements of determinism, it is impossible ever to render a decision as to whether determinism is a true doctrine — a correct theory of human behavior. The requirement is that nothing we do can be free of outside or inherited control. Thus the articulation of determinism must

*"Skinner maintains that people cannot help what they do, how they behave – not just sometimes but under all circumstances."*

also be an unfree act. When a deterministic analysis emerges from the lips of the determinist, by that view nothing else could have emerged. By the same token nothing else could have come from the lips of anyone who denies the truth of determinism. From the point of view of the determinist neither position could be held by choice.

In the end the main problem with Skinnerian and other kinds of all-encompassing determinism is that the position actually must assume what it flatly

denies. Some philosophers have put it thus: "Every determinist makes the claim that his account of the data is superior to his opponent's, and therefore *ought* to be accepted in preference to the alternative position." But as it is seen in Skinner, what can the phrase "ought to" mean to a determinist? Only those who admit that people can make choices can ask of them that they ought to do something; determinists can only predict that they will or will not. The idea that one ought to do something assumes that he could do it or refrain from doing it. And by advocating determinism the Skinnerians *(et al.)* presuppose what they deny – that others are free to appraise and eventually judge as correct a position such as determinism.

*"Determinism, then, has a major flaw: it is inconsistent."*

Determinism, then, has a major flaw: it is inconsistent. While Skinner believes that his form of behaviorism does not have to yield to logic, for those who like their philosophies and science to conform to the principles of logic – which are after all grounded on the nature of reality itself – this is not at all satisfactory.

What must be remembered, however, is that the above objections are not sufficient to prove that human beings *are* free. This is crucial. Thus far we have only argued against Skinner and have not proposed an alternative view: What we have so far shown is that Skinner's theory cannot be proved. Perhaps people never are free – some, I am sure, never exercise their capacity for choice, others do so very infrequently. What we aim to prove is that people *can* be free, that determinism is false.

Actually Skinner spends very little time on the idea of human freedom; he flatly denies that he discusses the problem. Since he believes that science must exclude human freedom, he does not seem to think that any independent argument for determinism is needed. I have dealt with the issue at some length because Skinner largely rests his position about man, society, and the future on his constantly reiterated denial of free will.

Why does he do this? Why does he feel he must reject even the possibility of human freedom? He does so in preparation for his denial of human dignity, of the fact that people can be better or worse, that they can achieve or fail, not just at some tasks but at living a successful life – at being morally excellent. All these notions, including the appropriateness of punishment in cases where persons do certain irresponsible things depend on the fact that people are usually free to choose between alternative courses of conduct. And to pave the way toward the rejection of these facts and corresponding ideas about human affairs, Skinner has to attack the very possibility of human freedom of choice.

## SKINNER VS. HUMAN DIGNITY

In everyday affairs as well as in critical situations human dignity plays an important role. The fact that everyone possesses the dignity of human life enables them to act in ways that they otherwise would not. For instance, although most of us know only a few persons intimately enough to have a personal regard for them, we are certainly acquainted with many other people. Our capacity for moral worth, that is, our human dignity answers the question of how these people, without any close relationship to us, ought to be treated. Perhaps not everyone needs to know that human beings possess dignity, that they are capable of moral achievement and should be understood in that light. But in many circumstances our emotions, immediate concerns, fears, or related factors can obliterate the empathy or natural feelings community people can have for each other. This is especially so in cities with large populations where we know only a few people among those encountered each day. The feelings of kinship, friendship, and fraternity can be superseded by other, more hostile emotions.

Yet even then other people are due at least a minimal degree of respect, simply by virtue of their humanity, however remotely that touches one at the moment. The idea that people are capable of freedom and can have moral aspirations of their own can be a lifesaver. Those who think before acting under emotional strains and other pressures certainly have a firmer than *ad hoc* guideline on how to deal with others. Not that we must view human dignity as some kind of useful myth. Without a basis, our belief in it could lead only to error – quite as Skinner would contend. Yet keeping in mind man's essential dignity, the fact that each person is capable of moral growth, is both in accordance with good judgment and fruitful conduct.

Human dignity is the link between the fact that people are capable of free choice and the value of political liberty for their social existence. Skinner knows this. If man has dignity, then violating his rights so as to secure some "nobler" aim – e.g., the survival of the culture – can be objected to on powerful grounds. Should it be proven, however, that dignity is a myth, that no man is worth the trouble in the face of such a "glorious" goal as the survival of a culture (whatever that means – for that notion belongs with such other vague ones as "society," "civilization," "race," "the people," and so on), then resistance to any social engineering cannot but be intellectually unfounded and based on irrational fears, just as Skinner suggests. The advocates and defenders of liberty are then simply unstable and

emotionally disturbed. If one accepts that human dignity is a myth, this suggestion doubtless has a great deal of force. Skinner would seem to have every reason to combat the ideas of freedom and dignity, to marshal science, technology, and the art of rhetoric in his behalf. They are his major obstacles on the road to a world of behavior technologists who would induce everyone to promote the survival of the culture.

What then is Skinner's substantive objection to the idea of human dignity? Basically he argues *ad hominem.* He tries to show that whenever people refer to human dignity, they are really after some dubious goal — they are deceitful, sneaky, and altogether underhanded. Consider what he says: "We attempt to gain credit by disguising or concealing control. We try to gain credit by inventing less compelling reasons for our conduct."

Dignity for Skinner is what merits credit, so we claim dignity to gain credit. "We recognize a person's dignity or worth when we give him credit for what he has done . . . . What we may call the literature of dignity is concerned with due credit." The reason we cling to dignity or worth is that "We are not inclined to give a person credit for achievements which are in fact due to forces over which he has no control."

Beyond assaulting the motives of those who stand up for it and those who refer to it in their own or someone else's case, Skinner has nothing to say in criticism of human dignity. He does note that the idea of dignity is often used to justify punishment — after all, he rather simplistically maintains, if credit is due for achievement, punishment must be due for failure. He cites no one who defends such a crass view of punishment — but then he cites no one extensively enough to give himself some kind of challenge.

## DIGNITY, FREE CHOICE, AND SKINNER'S STRATEGY

What is so puzzling is that Skinner's indictment of those who hide behind phony claims to credit, based on mythical notions about dignity or worth, cannot make sense within his frame of reference. But he does not bother to explain these inconsistencies. To disguise, conceal, invent, refrain, refuse, avoid, or court temptation all presuppose the ability to choose freely. Other than his original disclaimer about consistency, attributed to the prescientific character of the English language, Skinner says nothing to justify his exposition.

A point to be noticed here, easily obliterated in the search for arguments not forthcoming, is Skinner's approach to his readers. He counts on people's acceptance of humility as a cardinal virtue. He trades on this by discrediting any admission of self-worth, of the very possibility that one may indeed have earned some credit, or that any of the values one has come by are really through one's own achievements. Most people consider excessive pride a fault. It is generally called conceit or vanity. And overemphasizing one's achievements, especially in public, is an example. Should one respond to Skinner and Co. by protesting that, yes, he has achieved some goals and is due credit for them, it may appear that he "doth protest too loudly." Because to talk that way means *taking* credit and doing it in public. Just imagine someone standing up, after Skinner has finished speaking on the subject of how no one deserves credit for anything, and announcing that he feels he *does* deserve credit for what he has accomplished!

The virtues Skinner attacks are, significantly, those that can lead to personal pride. He never talks down at humility or modesty. Those human character traits he needs. But we must see in what light Skinner sees virtues. In all cases he finds them at the feet of autonomous man. It is in this respect (i.e., autonomous, free man, human beings as constituted by most defenders of the claim that people can do some [things] on their own) that human dignity is related to freedom. Only free beings can achieve what is valuable. And only free beings are capable of making of themselves morally worthy individuals.

## MAN AND MORAL VALUES

Rocks do not achieve values for themselves. Rocks break apart or dissolve, but they do nothing wrong. Nothing bad has thus happened by any standard of being or existing as a rock. It makes no sense to say that as far as rocks are concerned, breaking is bad.

Animals do gain from some things and lose by others. We can identify water as necessary to fish in order to live. But in the case of the bulk of the animal kingdom these values seem to be sought automatically. Little ones may be *trained* by older ones, but then they proceed to sustain their own lives. And they are deterred by inadvertent circumstances — matters they cannot plan for and cope with — quite often. There may be some cases where an animal approaches a stage of its life and experiences and, as some say, "having developed its cognitive capacities," begins to make choices about what it will do, i.e., select brand new alternatives. But the only evidence for this is in laboratory cases, or in instances involving a minute level of cognitive expansion from generation to generation. Most animals do not change from generation to generation; chicks and kittens and puppies and calves and colts and cubs learn no new tricks, as it were. And on what we call the lower level of evolutionary development, the issue of training does not arise — the relationship between conditions of birth and maturation are accounted for in purely chemical terms.

It is only with human beings that we must account for differences and changes in life styles, occupations, locations, economic conditions, partnerships, and all of the variations we find at the level of individual life. And it is here that we must cope not just with errors (animals make "errors," misperceive some things) but with gross, sustained, often fatal failures that have not been even faintly attributed to factors outside

one's control. It is here that achievements can occur, also.

Dignity, too, is an attainment that man can be worthy of. But dignity does not come with the achievement of just any sort of goal. It is only in a facetious and parasitical sense that a cruel or dishonest man gains dignity by achieving his goal of insulting or deceiving others; by self-deception *he* may consider this dignified. But this is trading on a different meaning of that idea. Dignity is earned by the achievement of goals that a human being *ought* to achieve.

In a way Skinner has a keen understanding of what he is doing. He may seem careless and sloppy and he is at times, but he has rationalized that fact very carefully. It fits in well with his program — to abolish rational man. "To man *qua* man we readily say good riddance." In bringing about this eviction it would be odd for Skinner to exhibit a great deal of care, precision, logic, and the host of other traits that we usually consider the virtues of man *qua* man (at least in the sense of the Greeks who started from these virtues and then came up with the rest of them). But Skinner sees clearly what he must do in order to establish his case. He must destroy all respect for human virtues, at least those associated with individualism, and for the condition that can be achieved by being virtuous — human dignity. Without human freedom there can be no dignity. And without dignity, why would anyone have reason to protest when his freedom is ignored by others? A totally dejected human being, convinced of his own impotence in the face of the world, will yield to whatever urges or pushes him the most — his own fears, others' criticism, the authority of some, or whatever.

## SKINNER AND POLITICAL LIBERTY

Free will and the possibility of human dignity demand a system that protects and preserves political liberty. What is Skinner's attitude toward political liberty and what role would it play in a Skinnerian world?

We need not imagine that Skinner evades altogether the differences between a society where political liberty is respected and one where arbitrary state power reigns. Skinner associates the conditions of political liberty with the absence of harmful, painful control, that is, aversive conditions. What is meant by the latter is tied up with Skinner's notion of negative enforcement, "Negative reinforcers are called aversive in the sense that they are the things organisms 'turn away from.' "

When the aversive treatment is intentional (i.e., when people act aversively toward each other to gain certain ends) people may do a number of different things. "For example, they may simply move out of range. A person may escape from slavery, emigrate or defect from a government, desert from an army, become an apostate from religion, play truant, leave home, or drop out of a culture as a hobo, hermit or hippie. Such behavior is as much a product of the aversive conditions as the behavior the conditions were designed to evoke."

What Skinner is trying to say is that resistance to control makes sense only if the control is exercised unwisely — by way of aversive stimulation. That is to say, as long as people use harmful, annoying, painful means by which to make other people do something, it is likely that there will be very powerful resistance. He concedes that "The literature of freedom has made an essential contribution to the elimination of many aversive practices in government, religion, education, family life, and the production of goods."

## THE LITERATURE OF POLITICAL LIBERTY

But Skinner does not like the literature of freedom despite these accomplishments which he claims are worthwhile. This is because (a) the literature has emphasized how the absence of aversive control *feels,* and (b) while it has "overlooked control which does not have aversive consequences at any time, it has encouraged escape from or attack upon all controllers." In short, Skinner considers the literature of freedom harmful because it has renounced not only aversive control, but the kind of positive reinforcing control that he believes should be employed to effect the survival of a culture.

One may imagine that Skinner may be thinking of a rather small and relatively harmless faction of that literature — hardly to be compared with what has been produced by John Locke, John Stuart Mills, and others who have advocated political liberty. That is, he may be thinking of the "humanistic" intellectuals, or some of them, who consider technology itself dangerous. Much is made these days of the horrible effects of computers, the impersonality of assigned numbers in various bureaucratic situations, the omnipresence of machinery and gadgets. There are technophobes in virtually every age — people who denigrated the locomotive, the airplane, the atomic power generator — and they often argue their "humanism" in terms of the *feelings* of dehumanization engendered by all the machines around them. One may imagine also that this is why Skinner focuses on Joseph Wood Krutch, Feodor Dostoevsky, Arthur Koestler, C. S. Lewis, Abraham H. Maslow, *et al.* as the *major* exponents of the literature of freedom. But they should be more properly considered humanists because they focus on the value of man *vis-a-vis* machines. However, their approach is relatively free of specific political recommendations. Among the people Skinner mentions, only Mill, Popper, and de Jouvenel offer comprehensive political theses — actually, Mill is the only well-known political theorist in the lot, and Skinner has mentioned him just once.

But imagining all this is to miss Skinner's purpose. He must know, as anyone else in our cultural and academic arenas must, that there have been very lengthy, prominent expositions on the nature of a

free society. Many philosophers concerned with the nature of a free society write about the kind of life that will gain a person happiness. Among the free society's recent defenders H. B. Acton, Leo Strauss, and Ayn Rand have been the most articulate about matters of personal conduct and morality in connection with political liberty.

What Skinner seems to dislike is that most of those who consider the free society a good social organization for human beings, in spite of their concern with themselves, are willing to leave the conduct of a person's life in his own hands. These people recognize that no matter how diligently they write books, offer advice, or teach children (barring coercion and the power of the state) it is ultimately they themselves who must choose to select what is good and exciting about life. At least they will have this chance secured for them. Then, of course, the individuals in the community can engage in the voluntary exchange of advice, recommendation, education, religion, and other forms of "Skinnerian control."

## SKINNER'S POLITICAL IDEALS

It is this basic trust in the capacity of individual human beings to conduct their lives with reasonable success that Skinner considers unwise. He agrees that controlling people with the result that they feel hurt, angry, or annoyed is imprudent — mainly because it gets people angry at control itself. Instead, the technology of behavior, with its emphasis on positive reinforcement (nonaversive control), must be employed. Indeed, the technophobia which emanates from some humanist circles, including the "back to nature" faction of the counter-culture, may pose obstacles to progress in, for example, the technology of teaching. Teaching machines, even though *machines,* have proven to be helpful to many children precisely because they can be adjusted to the child's individual needs. Skinner's own contribution to the field seems to promote attention to individuals and to cut down the need for directing educational measures to a hypothesized lowest common denominator.

*"Human dignity is the link between the fact that people are capable of free choice and the value of political liberty for their social existence."*

In this respect Skinner poses no threat to the libertarian. He joins hands with those who consider it wrong to impose restrictions on making technology work in man's behalf to its fullest capacities. And that is often opposed by humanists, ecologists, and conservationists. On top of this, the libertarian — the current advocate of political liberty and producer of the literature of freedom, would protect the rights of Skinner and others to offer and trade their services wherever they can and without interference from any political agent.

Skinner, who understands that the characteristics of the society advocated by libertarians (laissez-faire capitalism, with the function of government specified as the protection of the rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness including — property) should know that his own techniques can best be employed where freedom is protected. This would enable those who want to "feel free" and reject contact with technology to live their lives; while Skinner and all those interested in employing rigorous methods for improving the performances of people in various professions, crafts, and arts can charge ahead free of coercive controls, prohibitions, and restrictions — so long as they respect the rights of those involved.

But strangely enough this is not what Skinner is after. Some people have claimed that he actually is not committed to any particular political philosophy. Chomsky tells us that: "As to its social implications, Skinner's science of human behavior, being quite vacuous, is as congenial to the libertarian as to the fascist. If certain of his remarks suggest one or another interpretation, these, it must be stressed, do not follow from his 'science' any more than their opposites do."

Yet in the very same paragraph of his devastating review of *Beyond Freedom and Dignity,* Chomsky admits that: "There is little doubt that a theory of human malleability might be put to the service of totalitarian doctrine. If, indeed, freedom and dignity are merely the relics of outdated mystical beliefs, then what objection can there be to narrow effective controls instituted to ensure 'the survival of a culture'?"

Indeed, Skinner's "science" implies no political principles whatever. But what he *claims* is science, and what he claims follows from a "scientific" view of man, accommodate theories that support totalitarian regimes: people are fully malleable, albeit more by means of positive reinforcement rather than aversive control.

The deceptive attractiveness of Skinner's thesis is that we can readily admit to a place for his technology of behavior in various aspects of human life. Skinner has contributed to the improvement of such training. He has shown how some kinds of activities can be perfected, made smoother, speeded up, and, most importantly, adjusted to the capacities of the individual.

It is only when he introduces the idea that all this must be directed toward securing the survival of a culture that we must consider to what use his technology is limited. It is not necessary for Skinner to *advocate* totalitarianism. He need only show that he wants his techniques to be used for the *kind of* purposes that could only be served systematically by centralized control of a culture from above — a state or government. By counting on the direction of

expert behavioral technologists, in the role of designers, he is necessitating what amounts to a totalitarian state. Never mind that the expertise must manifest itself in positive reinforcement only. The idea of benevolent dictatorship is always the announced intention of designers of cultures who wish to invest power to exercise control only in selected personnel.

## SKINNERISM VS. FREEDOM AND DIGNITY

Now, Skinner may not be able to make clear what he means by the survival of the culture. Sometimes, by "culture" he means "species." But that also makes little sense — to work for the survival of the species. It is doubtful that one can actually make the effort to ensure such things. But Skinner believes that this is possible and desirable by way of behavioral technology. And he knows that the ideas of individualism — autonomous, free, dignified, and politically liberated man — simply do not conduce people to devote their lives to such obscure goals as helping along the life of the species or culture, beyond doing the best they are capable of in their own lives.

This is why Skinner attacks freedom and dignity. But his attack fails on so many counts that only stubbornness can keep one believing that Skinner really has contributed much to political theory in his *Beyond Freedom and Dignity.* As Dr. Bannister points out,

> Of the requirements which make a concretistic imitation of the natural sciences unprofitable in psychology, probably the most serious is that of reflexivity.
>
> . . . from a reflexive standpoint the psychological experiment is not a logical copy of the natural science experiment. It is inevitably a social situation in which one professional, formally qualified theorizer and predictor tries to predict the behavior of nonformally qualified theorizers and predictors.
>
> . . if the reflexive argument is accepted the psychologist cannot present a picture of man which patently contradicts his behavior in presenting that picture.

Throughout Skinner's books he is violating this prohibition. He is refusing to acknowledge that if *he* is capable of choosing values, the rest of us are too. And if we come up with different ones from his, the argument must be settled between us at the level at which values are established — logic, reason, and human nature. It is not enough just to say, "I am doing science, you are not; so I must be right and you must not." Especially when no science is being done at all in the process of coming up with the value in contention. ◻

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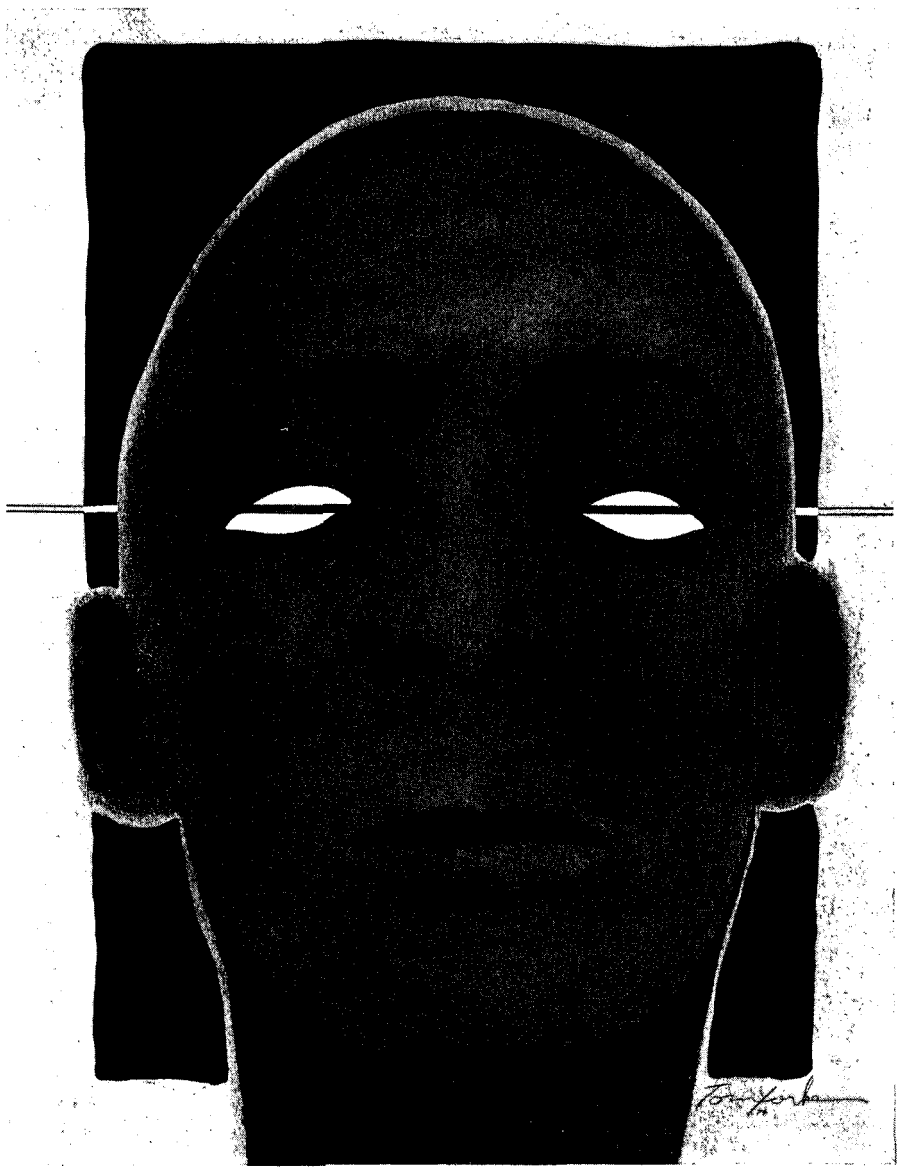
**Other features of the February issue will include a report from one of our foreign correspondents, Davis Keeler's Money Column, David Brudnoy's Viewpoint, and all of REASON's regular columns and features.**

# THE RAPE OF THE BLACK MIND



## Susan Love Brown

*One of the major political and social movements of our time has been (and still is) the civil rights movement. Blacks have sought freedom for a long time and have gradually cast off most of the political obstacles to that freedom. Susan Love Brown argues, however, that the civil rights movement has fallen short of its potential as a truly individualistic and libertarian repudiation of racism and collectivism, and looks for the causes in the history of the black experience in America.*

Blacks have sought freedom in America longer than any other group — racial, ethnic, religious, or otherwise. They have sought it in every way — rebellion, riot, protest, legislation, prayers — and they have almost achieved it. But the one thing that blacks have not succeeded in doing is throwing off the dogma of collectivism and embracing the spirit of individual freedom.

While individual blacks have achieved great things throughout history — regardless of the opposition which they faced — the majority of blacks today tend to think of themselves only as members of a group. While reality forces them to live as individuals and has blessed each with different standards, desires, abilities, goals, and dreams, many blacks still cling psychologically to the collective as their means of self-identification.

Today, with little freedom for anyone living in the oppressive shadow of the State, some people have managed to retain a sense of freedom within themselves and to hope for it and work with it. But to these people, freedom is centered around a view of themselves as independent beings. Such is not the case with the many blacks for whom freedom is sought in the ideologies of collectivism. Of course, much of this has to do with the psychological base

from which they are working. For these blacks, acquiring freedom in reality means overcoming an entire history of slavery and racism and its subsequent affects upon the minds of black people.

For a long time there were few black people in America — only carbon copies of white ones. That is to say, there were few men and women of color who accepted the reality of that color as natural and went on to live their lives as normal human beings, for in the United States being black has *never* been normal.

Since 1619, when the first slaves arrived in the colonies, being black has been detrimental. C. T. Vivian in *Black Power and the American Myth* describes the situation:

> The blacks who were brought to this country as slaves were systematically stripped of all cultural ties. Care was taken on most plantations to separate slaves who spoke the same language. Only English, a tongue foreign to them all, was permitted. African religions were forbidden. African customs and social organizations were impossible. All vestiges of African society were eradicated. The slaves were stripped of everything that had formerly sustained and defined them — from homeland to friends and family. In fact, every possibility for them to define themselves was removed; only by accident and in unimportant ways could they do so . . . . Every form of social life which could ordinarily be considered normal was forbidden. Even families in the ordinary sense were impossible. Women were used like cows, as breeders, to replenish and increase the stock . . . . It was a time when mothers strangled their newborn infants so that they would not have to grow up as slaves . . . . Blacks were permitted nothing by which to mark themselves as human. [1]

Psychologically, the color black has always been connected with the status of inferiority — slavery. Blacks were rarely considered as individuals, merely as members of a collective — and this is a psychological burden most bear to the present day. Not deaf, nor dumb to what was going on around them, blacks heard what was said about them by their masters and the general public, and little by little their images of themselves began to conform to that held by their masters. There was only one way to be free from pain, torture, hunger, abuse, and restraint — that was to be white. There was only one way to be accorded acknowledgment as an individual human being whose existence on earth was deemed a favorable consequence to his fellow man — and that was to be white. There was only one way to secure rights — that was to be white.

To be black was a negative thing. It was to be plagued and punished for existing. It was to always serve the will of another and never your own. It was, in fact, to learn to have no will at all. But, mostly, it meant being less than human — denigrated for being black and conceivably no other reason. It was in self-defense that blacks sought to escape the consequences of their blackness. They could not do it physically, but it was to a large extent possible psychologically.

Thus, was the black mind raped — deprived of the image of itself, an image that was not to be seen again or even recognized for a long, long time.

## SLAVERY

In *Black Rage,* two psychiatrists, William H. Grier and Price M. Cobbs, describe the process of degradation:

> The practice of slavery stopped over a hundred years ago, but the minds of our citizens have never been freed . . . . To be a bondsman was to experience a psychological development very different from the master's. Slavery required the creation of a particular kind of person, one *compatible* with a life of involuntary servitude. The ideal slave had to be absolutely dependent and have a deep consciousness of personal inferiority. His color was made the badge of that degradation. And as a final precaution, he was instilled with a sense of the unlimited power of his master. Teachings so painstakingly applied do not disappear easily. [2]

The institution of slavery set up a psychological slavery in the minds of blacks that lasted even after their physical chains were taken away. The slaves were "freed," but the mental chains held fast — each link a blinder to reality. Three hundred years of slavery are not erased by Executive Order or by Congressional decree. The damage had been done — the seeds of self-effacement had been planted. Inefficacy was everywhere in the average black mind — and self-esteem was nowhere. As Grier and Cobbs put it:

> They are taught to hate themselves, and if at some point they discover that they are the object of this hatred, they are faced with an additional task, nothing, for the imperative remains — Negroes are to be despised . . . . Thus the dynamics of black self-hatred are unique. [3]

The acceptance of psychological enslavement by blacks has been externally reinforced since the days of slavery primarily in two ways: culturally and politically. It is difficult to surmise which has been the most oppressive of the two, but the political reinforcement was certainly the most avoidable and the most apparent.

Despite the Emancipation Proclamation of Lincoln, the end of the Civil War, and the passage of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments, the harrassment of blacks was a continuing fact. Instead

of being allowed to enjoy the individual rights which would have seemed the proper consequence of their freedom, blacks were taken under the paternalistic wing of the State and their rights bandied about as if they were pawns on a political chessboard – the North on one side and the South on the other. The State approached blacks as a group – and encouraged collective treatment by instituting practices which denied any recognition outside that of color.

In *Civil Rights and the American Negro* (Albert P. Blaustein and Robert L. Zangrando, editors), a documentary history of the civil rights movement, it is reported:

> Throughout the former Confederate area, state governments legitimized by the terms of Presidential reconstruction proceeded in 1865 and 1866 to pass legislation regulating the status and conduct of newly freed Negroes. Termed Black Codes, these laws were based on the explicit assumption of Negro inferiority and sharply restricted the mobility and personal liberties of former free Negroes and new freedmen alike. [4]

The Black Codes defined the relationship between husband and wife, determined terms under which blacks could marry, defined the relationship of blacks to their employers as well as the terms of employment, and even restricted the kinds of employment blacks could seek, requiring licenses in some instances. These Black Codes, later revoked, cast blacks into the same kind of bondage from which they had newly come.

Southern governments, further, did everything possible to guarantee disenfranchisement of blacks – instituting for their purposes such practices as gerrymandering, white primaries, grandfather clauses, and poll taxes to prevent blacks from engaging in political activities through the ballot box.

*"Blacks have sought freedom in America longer than any other group . . ."*

Although there have always been blacks who voted in both the North and the South, it was not without tribulation. Southern governments faced with the prospect of fully sanctioned suffrage for blacks may not have succeeded in impeding its progress altogether, but they tried their best.

In 1865 in Pulaski, Tennessee, the Ku Klux Klan was formed as an "innocent joke" designed to "merely scare the stupid Negroes for fun." However, it was a joke which soon lost its humor. In 1867, a Klan convention was held and afterwards outright terrorization and brutalization of blacks became its main goal. J. W. Schulte Nordholt (*The People Who Walk in Darkness*) recounts:

> A Negro, speaking from bitter memory, has summed up fairly accurately what the Klan really did. He said that when Negroes earned good money and owned a profitable farm, the Ku Klux Klan murdered them. The Government built schools and the Ku Klux Klan burned them down. They went to prisons, took the colored prisoners, smashed their skulls, broke their necks and threw them into the river. This is a very condensed version of the contents of the thirteen volumes of the Congressional report on this matter. Although (General) Forrest dissolved the Klan in 1869 because it got completely out of hand, its activities continued as if nothing had happened. [5]

Despite a Congressional investigation of the Klan's activities, its violation of the rights of black individuals continued:

> When the attention of the North turned to other and more profitable objectives, the Negro was abandoned, and a special amnesty law of 1872 reinstated the civic rights of most of the former rebels. Every means of terror and violence were employed to keep the Negro from the polling stations. [6]

Thus, blacks were again betrayed by government when it was most expedient. Leaving the Reconstruction Era, the country moved on to the era of Jim Crow (1884-1914). Blaustein and Zangrando report:

> It was the period in which southern whites effected a common racial front against the Negro. Absorbed with industrial growth, cycles of economic prosperity and depression, further settlement of the West, and, finally, the challenge of colonial adventures, the nation at large proved indifferent to the status of the Negro. The dominant majority treated the Negro's lack of education, training, and wealth as confirmation of inferiority, and justifed, on that basis, all forms of discriminatory behavior toward black Americans. State after State throughout the South and border areas changed their constitutions and instituted statutory measures designed to deprive the Negro of all opportunities for civic and political participation. Other laws imposed segregated facilities in education, travel, public accommodations, and the like; and the concept of Jim Crow was extended to all forms of public activity – frequently under the force of broadly structured laws, but also under the rubrics of "tradition" and "custom." [7]

Blacks entered the 20th century still deeply aware that something was wrong. The whole attitude of government and society was negative. The conclusion too often drawn was not that something was wrong with government or with society, but that there was something innately wrong with themselves.

Ultimately, blacks learned to use politics to their own benefit — to wield it as a weapon against the oppressors that had used it against them. Their actions in this respect were a form of self-defense, though it has never protected them from the political or psychological commitment to collectivism. Moral or immoral, learning to use politics to some extent freed blacks from the rigors of discrimination. But politics is a booby-trap which can spring on the very people that manipulate it. Blacks have become entangled in the political apparatus that has perpetuated collectivism — the philosophy which is responsible for their oppression in the first place. Many blacks, in an effort to "fight back" have, ironically, adopted the ethics of their oppressor — they have become the philosophical neighbors of the proponents of racism.

## CULTURAL EFFECTS

The cultural reinforcement of psychological enslavement has been far more subtle than the political — and its ramifications more widely spread and more difficult to uproot. Culturally, blacks needed only to assimilate the essence of the culture around them — a proposition calculated to blow the black mind to bits, for the culture around them was not at all suited to them. It required, again, that they deny the physical reality of what they were.

American culture consisted of (and still does to a lesser extent today) a standard of beauty based on the blond-haired, blue-eyed mystique; a language which was foreign to blacks and access to which had been denied them educationally; a literature that negated their existence by simply not mentioning them or degrading them when it did; art and music that was not theirs.

The physical characteristics of blacks have always made them identifiable. Seeking subconsciously to obliterate when possible these characteristics which made them so foreign to the cultural norm, they succumbed to the temptation. The beauty standard is only one example of many too numerous to mention here.

Although many of the actions taken by blacks in this respect appeared to be merely cosmetic (the improvement of one's physical appearance for one's own satisfaction), it was psychologically an attempt to exorcise the blackness so identified with inferiority — and to imitate the whiteness so identified with normalcy. This is why at one time creams that promised to bleach the skin several shades lighter


# Two Essays by Nobel Prize Winning Economist Friedrich A Hayek

The peculiar character of the problem of a rational economic order is determined precisely by the fact that the knowledge of the circumstances which we must use never exists in concentrated or integrated form but solely as the dispersed bits of incomplete and frequently contradictory knowledge which separate individuals possess. The economic problem of society is thus not merely a problem of how to allocate "given" resources — if "given" is taken to mean given to a single mind which deliberately solves the problem set by these "data." It is rather a problem of how to secure the best use of resources known to any of the members of society, for ends whose relative importance only these individuals know. Or, to put it briefly, it is a problem of the utilization of knowledge which is not given to anyone in its totality.

. . . .The Use of Knowledge in Society

The character of the process by which the views of the intellectuals influence the politics of tomorrow is therefore of much more than academic interest. Whether we merely wish to foresee or attempt to influence the course of events, it is a factor of much greater importance than is generally understood. What to the contemporary observer appears as the battle of conflicting interests has indeed often been decided long before in a clash of ideas confined to narrow circles. Paradoxically enough, however, in general only the parties to the Left have done most to spread the belief that it was the numerical strength of the opposing material interests which decided political issues, whereas in practice these same parties have regularly and successfully acted as if they understood the key position of the intellectuals. Whether by design or driven by the force of circumstances, they have always directed their main effort toward gaining the support of this "elite," while the more conservative groups have acted, as regularly but unsuccessfully, on a more naive view of mass democracy and have usually vainly tried directly to reach and to persuade the individual voter.

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were so popular among blacks. But besides being trapped inside a black skin, being black carried with it another physical (and ultimately psychological) "disability" – hair. For the most part, blacks have been endowed by nature with "kinky" hair – hair that is not long and straight like that of most whites or Indians or Asians, but hair that is super-curly – hair that coils very close to the roots. The only available means of circumventing this natural phenomena was to straighten the hair.

*"Three hundred years of slavery are not erased by Executive Order or by Congressional decree."*

Although black men were also plagued by this curse, it was primarily black women who had to endure the agonies of the straightening comb (the hot comb, the straightening iron), and the process was pure hell, physically as well as psychologically. It involved taking the hair piece by piece, applying grease, and then taking the heavy straightening comb from the fire on the stove, and pulling it through the reluctant hair. The heat from the comb often melted the grease on the hair which dripped onto the scalp and burned. The hair stayed straight only so long as one managed to avoid rain, swimming pools, and perspiration – otherwise, it "went back" to its natural state around the edges and was referred to as "nappy." Those blacks who happened to have been born with straight hair that didn't require "pressing" were said to have "good" hair; everyone else's was "bad."

Hot combs were eventually replaced with permanents which straightened hair by employing chemicals that stripped the hair of its outer layers, leaving it too limp to recoil. The caustic action of the chemicals often burned the skin, leaving scars; but it was better than the agony of the hot comb (and easier to pretend that one had been born with hair like that). Only technology and the increasing self-awareness of blacks alleviated the hair problems – the Natural (or Afro or Bush) came into style. Even then many blacks resisted the new hairstyle (through hostility toward those who adopted it) which was too visible a reminder of the blackness they were subconsciously trying to avoid. Grier and Cobbs describe the psychological consequences of the hair "problem" and of the cultural beauty standard:

> Long, straight hair and a fair skin have seemed to be the requirements for escaping the misery of being a black woman. One can only guess at the agony of countless black women who have spent their hard-earned money for a bottled, emulsified escape from being the way they are. And it is difficult to imagine their frustration and hopelessness when they finally realized that they could not change their hair or their color . . . . The Negro woman's black face, African features, and kinky hair are physical attributes which place her far from the American ideal of beauty, and make her, with reference to the American ideal, ugly. When the feeling of ugliness is reinforced by the rejection of family and society, the growing girl develops a feeling not only of being undesirable and unwanted, but also of being mutilated – of having been fashioned by Nature in an ill-favored manner. [8]

Many whites were never aware of this whole sequence of events, and even today will walk up to a black person with a Natural and ask them how they get their hair like that (only to find out that it *grows* that way)!

## BLACK IS BEAUTIFUL

In the 1960's, the rise of black awareness brought to the surface many of the emotional ramifications of the premises which many blacks had accepted. Some blacks recognized their dilemma and struck back at it with "black is beautiful" – an attempt to eliminate the emotional despair by asserting its opposite. The old code of behavior was cast away – mostly by the young. Many blacks began wearing their hair naturally, they adopted dress which connected them with their African past, they laid claim to "soul" music, studied Swahili, and began to publicize all of the extraordinary accomplishments of blacks throughout history – information that had lain dormant, consistently evaded and never reaching the public's attention. Black culture was born full grown out of the conscious refusal of blacks to regard themselves any longer as objects of inferiority. Black artists who had been around for years gained "over night" prominence, and black literature became an object of interest.

All of this could have been a breakthrough for blacks – it could have been the beginning of self-acceptance and the beginning of the end of the psychological slaughter that had so long been an unwritten part of black history. But many blacks still clung to the ideals of collectivism – they had assimilated it along with everything else in the culture around them, though unconsciously – and so the root of the problem (the concept that being black was the most significant thing about them) has not been escaped. The inferiority complex has merely changed directions and disguised itself in the assertion of superiority. The call for "solidarity" became the order of the day, and to disagree with the group was to be divested of one's blackness by the group – the new manifestation of the same old

psychological problem. In other words, the group giveth and the group taketh away.

And so, the boastful flaunting of one's blackness has become merely another means of obscuring the fact that one isn't really sure of anything regarding one's own being. It is no surprise that the current wave of black collectivism is so strong, helped along by those competent intellectuals who daren't raise the ire of the group by begging to differ, but who add a sophisticated flair to the same old rhetoric of slavery (and catch their individuality on the side).

*"Black culture was born full grown out of the conscious refusal of blacks to regard themselves any longer as objects of inferiority."*

The word "freedom" has been supplanted by the word "liberation," and the existence of the singular being has been scorned — the life of an individual and successful black person is now (and often willingly in guilt) mortgaged over to the collective. A new guilt has been launched upon the psyches of blacks — commitment to the group above all else (this time other blacks) — and nothing has changed.

(It should be obvious that blacks are not the *only* group that has perpetuated collectivism in their search for liberation. Indeed, the Civil Rights Movement which began in the South with its focal point on the rights of black people in addition to its political gains — good or bad, right or wrong — has triggered a chain reaction among other groups which have adopted the same techniques proven "successful" in the black movement. Mexican Americans struggle to implement "Brown Power," American Indians speak of "Red Power," and women — a majority, not a minority — equate themselves with oppressed blacks. There is an overwhelming disposition toward collectivism among representatives of these groups. Although these groups do have valid claims, they are for the most part obscured. It is not unusual even in these groups to see the fate of an individual member become insignificant compared to that of the group.)

## PSYCHOLOGY

There can be no doubt that many blacks have suffered psychologically from their refusal to see themselves as individuals. The proof is in the high incidence of psychoses among them, as noted by E. Earl Baughman in *Black Americans:*

> [I]t is clear that the incidence rates for certain types of psychoses are disproportionately high among blacks. Two of these are organic disorders, *paresis* (a consequence of syphilis) and *alcoholic psychosis.* Schizophrenia is also more common among blacks (Malzberg estimates a 2-to-1 black-white ratio) as is manic-depressive psychosis (for this syndrome, Malzberg estimates a 1.5-to-1 black-white ratio). In interpreting these data, Malzberg emphasizes that blacks are not biologically more vulnerable, rather he sees the environment as being responsible for their unfavorable mental health record . . . . [9]

But the science of psychology is to a large extent unable to offer blacks any real help in regaining their perspective of themselves. Psychologically, the problem is not that the minds of blacks function differently. Grier and Cobbs say:

> There is nothing reported in the literature or the experience of any clinician known to the authors that suggests that black people *function* differently psychologically from anyone else. Black men's mental functioning is governed by the same *rules* as that of any other group of men. Psychological principles understood first in the study of white men are true no matter what the man's color . . . . Rather that the unique experience of black men is a constant factor influencing growth and activity and is frequently a focal point upon which basic principles are seen to act . . . The problem encountered by emotionally troubled blacks are by no means confined to black people. [10]

The problem is that certain attitudes which are considered psychologically unhealthy usually are held to be *normal for blacks,* even by psychologists like Grier and Cobb themselves who say:

> For his own survival, then, he must develop a *cultural paranoia* in which every white man is a potential enemy unless proved otherwise and every social system is set against him unless he personally finds out differently . . . . He develops a sadness and intimacy with misery which has become a characteristic of black Americans. It is a *cultural depression* and a *cultural masochism* . . . . These and related traits are simply adaptive devices developed in response to a peculiar environment. They are no more pathological than the compulsive manner in which a diver checks his equipment before a dive or a pilot his parachute. They represent normal devices for "making it" in America. [11]

So in the realm of psychology blacks are faced not with a cure for their individual inability to function healthily as human beings; they run into the collective log jam of "The Black Norm" — "cultural paranoia," and "cultural depression," and "cultural masochism." The black in America today is not even allowed to *suffer* in solitude.

Nathaniel Branden, the founder of the school of

biocentric psychology, would call this attitude on the part of certain psychologists "cultural relativism." Branden explains it thus in *The Psychology of Self-Esteem:*

> The theorists who maintain this position usually insist that the closest one can come to a definition of mental health is: conformity to cultural norms. Thus, they declare that a man is psychologically healthy to the extent that he is "well-adjusted" to his culture. [12]

Branden's development of biocentric theory is perhaps the greatest boon that black individuals could have hoped for. For Branden has recognized the existence of the individual mind and has dared to define mental health objectively:

> An unobstructed, integrated consciousness, consciousness in unbreached cognitive contact with reality, is *healthy.* A blocked, disintegrated consciousness, a consciousness incapacitated by fear or immobilized by depression, a consciousness corrupted in its function by reality-avoidance mechanisms, a consciousness dissociated from reality — is *unhealthy.* [13]

It matters not one iota to the mental well-being of the individual black whether he has shared with others the experience which has torn his mind asunder — this common bond does not spare him as an individual from the loss of self-esteem if he has accepted his own inferiority; nor does it cure his problem to adjust to it, or call it an "adaptive device," or to become "incapacitated by fear," or "immobilized by depression."

Abraham Maslow, another psychologist who places great emphasis on the individual being, has said: "Not allowing people to go through their pain, and protecting them from it, may turn out to be a kind of over-protection, which in turn implies a certain lack of respect for the integrity and the intrinsic nature and the future development of the individual." [14] Maslow, who has studied healthy people, defines their characteristics (among others) as being a superior perception of reality, increased acceptance of self, of others and of nature, increased detachment and desire for privacy, increased autonomy and resistance to enculturation, etc. — all of these pointing to a greater emphasis on the individual. [15]

Fortunately, more psychologists are turning toward a consideration of the individual than has ever been true in the past. Even those who have not begun to take the "individual" approach per se are at least becoming familiar again with the concept of "self." Hopefully, this is a trend that will continue in the future to the benefit of all persons who have previously felt that their primary identification was with a group rather than with their own being.

The fact of reality is that until blacks as individuals can recognize all of the hurt and the pain and face it head on with the consciousness of what has been done to them both by others and by themselves — until they can accept, and indeed, rally around their individuality — they will not be able to implement political freedom, nor will they ever be able to escape the psychological enslavement to which all collectivists inevitably subject themselves.

To implement freedom, one must understand its source — the nature of people as conscious, thinking beings who must rely on their own individual minds to survive.

The road which the individual black must take is a long and eventful one. It involves the rebuilding of a whole *self* out of the devastation of a mind that has been reduced to ashes in the past. It involves adopting a whole new view of what it means to be human. It involves the courage to maintain one's individuality despite claims to the contrary. It involves putting the color of one's skin and other racial characteristics into a proper and realistic perspective.

It is not easy for any human being — black, Mexican American, Indian, or woman — to stand up against the pressures of an entire cultural persuasion insisting that the group must come first.

But the requirements of being *human* demand that one's primary allegiance be to reality — and, hence, to the vision of oneself as a separate being with a separate (and sacred) soul.

If one defaults in this area, nothing — not even the loudest clamor of the collective in protest — can raise the human spirit from the degradation of the ashes to which reality will condemn it. ◻

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(4) Albert P. Blaustein & Robert L. Zangrando, editors, *Civil Rights and the American Negro* (Washington Square Press 1968), p. 217.
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(10) Grier and Cobbs, *op. cit.,* pp. 129-30.
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(12) Nathaniel Branden, *The Psychology of Self-Esteem* (Nash Publishing, 1969), pp. 89-90.
(13) *Ibid.,* p. 95.
(14) Abraham H. Maslow, *Toward a Psychology of Being* (D. Von Nostrand Co. 1968), p. 8.
(15) *Ibid,* pp. 25-26.

## BEST ON THE MARKET FOR VALUE AND PRICE

# A Comprehensive One Year Emergency Food Supply For Only $399

## RECOMMENDED BY HARRY BROWNE IN HIS BEST SELLING BOOK, "YOU CAN PROFIT FROM A MONETARY CRISIS"

During the last five years, we emphasized acquisition of gold coins as a security investment in our advertisements in the Wall Street Journal, Barron's, Human Events, American Opinion, Reason, and other publications. Those who bought these coins through us have already realized great benefits. Now we are advocating acquisition of a ready reserve food supply also as a security investment. Reflection on the past and on what politicians have done and are doing to this country show this to be necessary.

We provide an expertly designed low-moisture food supply, eliminating guesswork on what to store. The low-moisture method (developed about 23 years ago) includes dehydration or freeze drying the food and packing it in cans from which the air has been evacuated and replaced with an oxygen-free atmosphere before sealing. Long term shelf-life (lasting up to 15 years without special requirements) enables storage for emergency use, but contents are also excellent for every day meals and assure an inflation hedge. Open cans will not spoil for several months (over a year on most items), thus allowing full use of contents. Plastic covers are provided for opened cans.

Our Ready Reserve Supply, costing only $399.00, is an eleven case unit, plus 150 pounds of whole kernel wheat (packed in three bags, which may be omitted at a $17.00 price reduction). Each case contains 6 enamelled #10 cans. (A #10 can is slightly smaller than a gallon.) Total weight of the supply (including the bagged wheat) is approximately 400 pounds, and all items, including the wheat, are long lasting. (Whole kernel wheat has been found to be completely usable even after 20 years of storage, without requiring special packaging.) However, if you still prefer long storage flour, we will send 30 cans of whole wheat or white flour, bringing your yearly supply to a cost of $449.00.

This supply (wheat included) is sufficient for one person for a 12-month period. There is nothing else on the market to provide the same or similar nutrition for this price. The nearest comparable supplies cost over $100.00 more. Yet, this supply is a high protein unit (see cases "B," "C," "D" and "E") and also contains fats for baking, sandwiches, etc., which are often missing in units costing far more. The supply also contains three outstanding survival and cook books, which can provide valuable suggestions in adverse situations, as well as excellent recipes. They are: PASSPORT TO SURVIVAL, CULINARY CAPERS, and FAMOUS MORMON RECIPES.

A stone grinder, costing only $43.00 (including shipping) is available. The small amount of work involved in grinding the wheat is more than made up by the higher nutritional value of the fresh flour thus obtained, as compared to flour from a store or even in the best packaged cans. The grinder can also be used for other purposes.

Five optional cases are available to provide extra variety. However, these are not essential.

**We provide more and better food in our 12-month supplies than other units claimed to be sufficient for 15 months. Compare it for proof.**

IMPORTANT NOTICE: Many persons wanting food insurance have asked if our supplies can be obtained on a time payment basis. Nevada Coin Exchange does not encourage customers to become more in debt. But food is more vital for survival than any other item. Therefore we have made arrangements with Master Charge and BankAmericard to enable time payments (or cash payouts) for purchases from us. If you wish to use this service, please fill in your Master Charge or BankAmericard number on the order form.

COIN INVESTMENTS: Our emphasis here on food is not intended to downgrade the importance of gold and silver coins. The dollar can be expected to go the way of the German Mark in 1923. Worsening monetary conditions are probably coming, and it is not too late to begin or enlarge a supply of real money – gold and silver coins.

Prices on gold and silver coins vary substantially each day. For this reason, you should call us for the latest prices. We will give you a telephone quote which will hold for 3 or 4 days until your check arrives. Fully insured coin shipping prices paid by us.

U. S. and foreign gold coins are listed on reverse of this sheet. All U. S. and foreign gold coins in uncirculated condition.

**FULL GUARANTEE: If unsatisfied, U. S. customers may return coins and/or food ordered to Nevada Coin Exchange within ten days for a complete refund of purchase price and shipping charges.**

## ORDER FORM

NAME _____ ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PLEASE SEND:

_____ Modular Yearly Supplies (150 pounds of whole kernel wheat included) @ $399.00 each

_____ Modular Yearly Supplies without wheat @ $382.00

_____ Modular Yearly Supplies with 30 cans of:
☐ whole wheat flour; or ☐ white flour @ $449.00 each

_____ Stone grinder @ $43.00

_____ PCP Water Purifier @ $39.00 (removes polluting particles and kills bacteria; good for 1,500 gallons of water)

OPTIONAL CASES:

_____ Case K @ $41.70

_____ Case L @ $20.75

_____ Case M @ $39.45

_____ Case N @ $47.65

_____ Case O @ $54.80

(For other items, please use separate sheet to list your purchase.)

TOTAL FOR ORDERED FOOD AND COINS _____

Master Charge Number
BankAmericard Number _____
*(use only for all items except coin orders)*

Food shipped via truck. Shipping charges payable by purchaser on receipt of food, and vary between $20.00 and $60.00 per yearly supply depending on location. We will pay the difference if shipping charges exceed $60.00

Shipping charges to Canada must be prepaid. Send $60.00 per yearly supply for Canadian shipping; overpayments will be promptly refunded.

**NO WHOLE KERNEL WHEAT CAN BE SHIPPED TO CANADA.**

Canadian orders $20.00 handling charge.

Coin orders shipped by fully insured mail (paid by us.)

**CALL US FOR LATEST GOLD AND SILVER PRICES.**

Check, money order, or other convenient form of payment acceptable and payable to:

NEVADA COIN EXCHANGE
P. O. Box 485, 1104 W. Sunset
Carson City, Nevada 89701
Telephone (702) 882-2483

Bank References at Request

## CONTENTS OF 12-MONTH MODULAR SUPPLY

**37 Items plus 3 Books**

*ALL CANS ARE #10 SIZE (EXCEPT YEAST), EACH BEING SLIGHTLY SMALLER THAN A GALLON.*

| FOOD GROUP | QUANTITY OF CANS | NET WEIGHT IN POUNDS | NO. OF SERVINGS | REMARKS |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| PROTEINS | | | | |
| Beef Flavored Textured Vegetable Protein (T.V.P.) | 4 | 10 | 126 | These four items are equivalent in proteins to 86 pounds of lean meat. |
| Chicken Flavored T.V.P. | 2 | 5 | 63 | |
| Ham Flavored T.V.P. | 2 | 5 | 63 | |
| Plain T.V.P. | 2 | 5 | 63 | |
| Whole Eggs, or Scrambling Eggs | 2 | 6 | 192 | Contents are of 192 eggs. |
| Peanut Butter | 1 | 3 | 96 | Based on ½ ounce servings. |
| Cheddar Cheese | 1 | 3¼ | 104 | Based on 1 ounce per serving. |
| Baby Lima | 1 | 5½ | 57 | Based on 4 ounces per serving. |
| Green Split Peas | 1 | 5½ | 57 | Based on 4 ounces per serving. |
| Soup, Beef Based | 1 | 4½ | 100 | Based on 6 ounces per serving. |
| Milk, Regular, Non-Fat, High Yield | 12 | 48 | 920 | After reconstitution with water, 230 quarts are obtained to provide 920 of 8 ounce servings. |
| FRUITS | | | | |
| Apple Sauce | 1 | 2¼ | 86 | After reconstitution with water, these items are the equivalent to approximately 100 pounds of fresh fruits and provide about 500 of 3 ounce servings. |
| Fruit Mix | 2 | 5 | 184 | |
| Banana Slices | 1 | 2¾ | 86 | |
| Peach Slices | 1 | 2 | 73 | |
| Raisins, Seedless | 1 | 4½ | 80 | |
| VEGETABLES | | | | |
| Stew Blend | 1 | 1¾ | | After reconstitution with water, these items are equivalent to approximately 220 pounds of fresh vegetables and provide about 400 of 4 ounce servings. |
| Granulated Potatoes | 2 | 12 | | |
| Peas, Green, Garden | 1 | 2¾ | | |
| Tomato Crystals | 1 | 2½ | | |
| Cabbage Dices | 1 | 1 | | |
| Carrots | 1 | 1 | | |
| Green Beans, Cut | 1 | 1 | | |
| Soup Blend | 1 | 1½ | | |
| GRAINS | | | | |
| Corn Meal | 1 | 4½ | 42 | Based on 4 ounces per serving. |
| Rolled Oats | 2 | 5½ | 84 | Based on 4 ounces per serving. |
| Rice | 2 | 11 | 186 | Based on 4 ounces per serving. |
| Elbow Macaroni | 1 | 3½ | 60 | Based on 4 ounces per serving. |
| Cereal, Fruits and Nuts | 2 | 6 | 105 | Based on 4 ounces per serving. |
| 150 Pounds of Whole Kernel Wheat, or other selection. (see "Notes") | | 150 | | Sufficient for 9½ ounces of bread or other items for 365 days. |
| FATS | | | | |
| Margarine | 3 | 9 | | Converts into 10 pounds after adding required water. |
| Shortening (Vegetable Type) | 3 | 8¼ | | Converts into 9¼ pounds after adding required water. |
| SUPPLEMENTS | | | | |
| Brown Sugar | 2 | 10 | | Sufficient for 12 months: |
| White Sugar | 2 | 12 | | |
| Salt | 1 | 7½ | | Sufficient for 12 months. |
| Yeast, Active, Dry | 1 | 2 | | Sufficient for 12 months. |
| Baking Powder | 1 | 5 | | Sufficient for 12 months. |
| Baking Soda | 1 | 6 | | Sufficient for 12 months. |

NOTES:

1. All cans are enamelled #10 size (except yeast), each being slightly smaller than a gallon. Six such cans are packed in each case. The normal supply also contains 150 pounds of whole kernel wheat, packed in three bags, but this item can be omitted. If whole wheat flour or white flour are preferred, they must come in sealed cans, as they are otherwise not storable for an extended period.
2. The approximate weight and size of the supply (150 pounds of bagged whole kernel wheat, or 30 cans of flour included) is 400 pounds, and 18 cubic feet (about 2x3x3 feet).
3. Substitutions are often available. For example, if you prefer all brown sugar (or vice-versa), rather than our 50/50 mix with white sugar, we will make the change at no extra charge.
4. The regular non-fat milk listed above is not to be confused with instant milk, as our milk has twice the yield per can of instant milk.
5. Three books are included with the supply: PASSPORT TO SURVIVAL, CULINARY CAPERS, and FAMOUS MORMON RECIPES.
6. Price of the supply is as follows: With 150 pounds of bagged whole kernel wheat, $399.00. Without the wheat $382. With 30 cans of whole wheat or white flour, $449.00. Prices subject to change without notice.

FIVE OPTIONAL CASES:

CASE K – $41.70: 1 Gelatin, Citrus Flavor; 1 Gelatin, Fruit Flavor; 1 Tapioca; 1 Dessert Filling Mix; 1 Milk Shake Mix; 1 Egg Custard.
CASE L – $20.75: 1 Yam flakes; 2 Granulated potatoes; 1 Diced potatoes; 2 Mixed Vegetable Soup.
CASE M – $39.45: 1 Corn; 1 Spinach; 1 Celery; 1 Onions; 1 Carrots; 1 Stew Blend.
CASE N – $47.65: 1 Date Dices; 1 Fruit Cocktail; 1 Peach Slices; 1 Prunes; 1 Raisins; 1 Banana Slices.
CASE O – $54.80: 1 Shortening; 1 Margarine; 1 Butter; 1 Sour Cream; 2 Eggs, whole or scrambling.

# COLLECTING COINS FOR FUN & PROFIT

**Robert B Crim**

*The dramatic rise in the price of gold rekindled the interest of the American public in that king of all metals, while at the same time, continuing inflation convinced a large number of them that the man who said the dollar was as good as gold was not* quite *telling the truth. Many Americans also discovered for the first time that their government, in its benevolent wisdom, had determined that it was not a good thing for its citizens to own gold. So the question naturally arose, how should one go about obtaining that precious metal without arousing the anger of some over-zealous Treasury agent?*

*People who knew the gold laws knew that the bullion could be legally held so long as it was poured in an artistic shape — apples are nice. That was because the gold was then "jewelry" and was exempt under the law. Others, though, found it easier to go out and buy up old gold coins. And that is where this article really begins, because that is where people made their first mistake.*

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## THE PROBLEMS OF NUMISMATIC INVESTMENT

Investing in coins, any coin, regardless of metal, is not the same thing as investing in bullion. Investing in bullion is really no different than investing in any other commodity, and that is where metals are traded — on the commodity markets. A coin is not a commodity — not if it is really worth saving. It is a unique piece of medallic art, and must be treated with the same sort of care and caution one would employ for a great painting. A person who buys a coin for its bullion content is about as wise as a person who buys a painting for its paint content.

Any coin, regardless of its bullion, has at least two components to its total value. Obviously, its bullion is worth something, and it is still possible to get coins whose value is almost entirely due to the bullion. But, in addition to the bullion component, all coins have a value brought on by their worth to collectors. Finally, gold coins have an extra component of value called *premium* which exists because of the present illegality of holding raw gold bullion. Thus, we can say that the total value of a coin is equal to its bullion value plus its premium value plus its numismatic value.

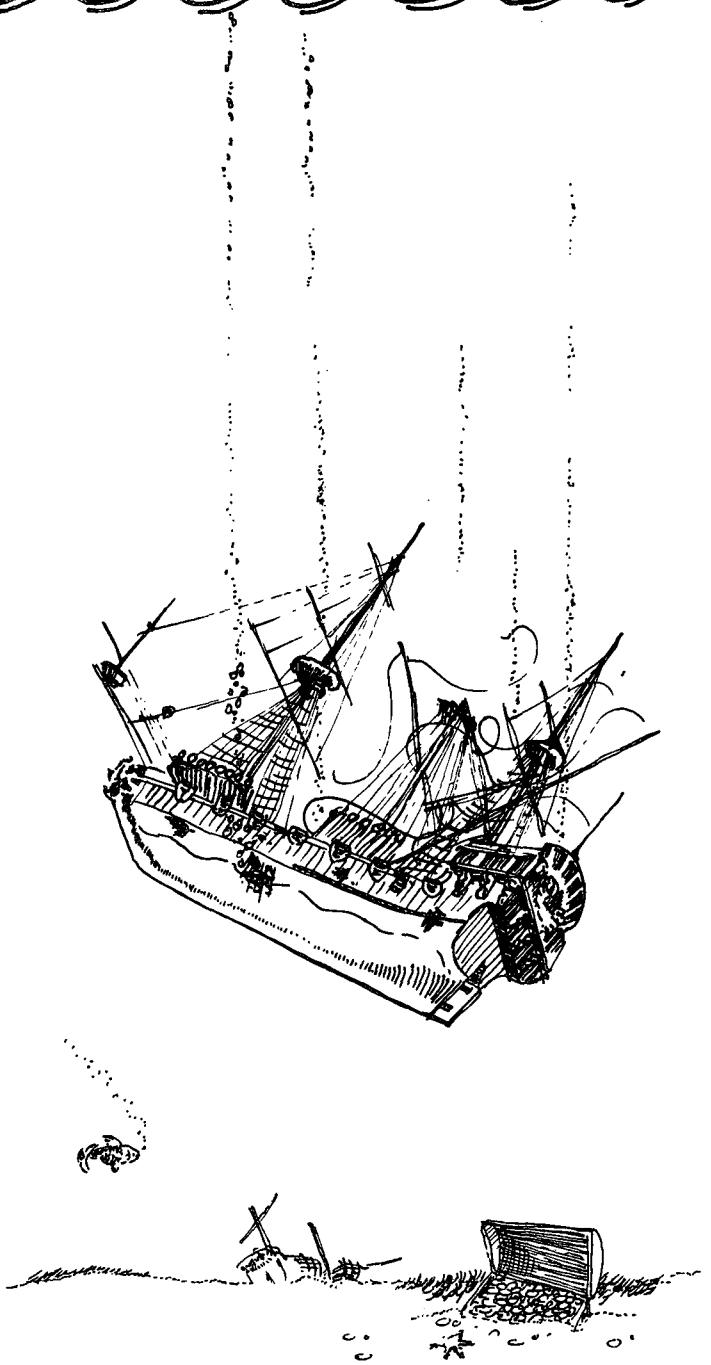
It should now be clear that a coin is a different good than the bullion out of which it is made. It behaves according to a supply and demand schedule quite different from bullion, and may go up or down independently of the metal. (As one example of how this might happen in the future, consider what will probably happen once the gold laws are scrapped at the end of December 1974. In that case, the bullion value of a gold coin will increase, since the large expansion of the market will bring on a rise in the price of gold. But the premium will then be zero, and if the sudden fall in the premium is not offset by an increase in the bullion and numismatic components, the price of such coins could actually fall.)

No American gold coin sells for much less than double its bullion value, so anyone who buys it solely for bullion is making a lousy investment.

Unaware of the importance of date, mint, variety, or condition to the true value of the coin, the novice or the bullion-buyer has a lot of room in which to go wrong. It is true, he might still make money; then again, he might also get lucky in Las Vegas or at the races. It comes down to just about the same thing.

For a long time, now, libertarians have talked about the joys of operating in a free market. Well, dealing in coins is about as free a market as there can be in this world under its present management, and the reader would be surprised at just how fast those joys can turn to sorrow. In a free market, it is truly *caveat emptor.* There is no one to turn to if a mistake is made. The responsibility of succeeding lies primarily with the buyer. Even getting stuck with a counterfeit can be a problem, as it might not be possible to get one's money back. Also, the rules of buying and selling are different. People used to seeing posted prices and paying same are likely to be confused by the practices of bargaining which go on at dealer bourse tables. It's like being in a foreign country. One must always remember: once that dealer sells his coin, it is gone forever, so he must squeeze every dime out of it he can. If he thinks you will pay it, he will ask the highest price. It is up to *you* to talk him down.

I have tried to be sober about numismatic investments to begin with because I wish to impress upon the reader that there is no sure method by which one can make money, whether by buying coins or anything else. If making money in coins was such a sure thing, who would bother to work for a living? However, for those who are willing to learn, and are willing to risk losing a little money for the knowledge they will need, then perhaps the rest of this article will help them learn more and lose less.



## ON COINS AND COINS

There are coins and there are coins. The former are genuine; the latter leave a certain something to be desired. So the first problem confronting a new collector is to determine whether the coins he is being offered are real.

If the reader gets the same government propaganda I do, he "knows" that Uncle Sam turns out high-quality work while counterfeiters turn out shoddy merchandise. Well, I have seen some fakes that took an electron microscope to detect, and I would say *that* constitutes pretty good forgery.

The problem of determining the authenticity of a coin is not all that difficult, however. A counterfeit is detected by its mistakes, and since no two engravers can duplicate each other's work, detection of a fake is almost always possible. Furthermore, the quality of the fakes decreases as the numismatic value of the piece declines. To pass as a numismatic counterfeit, a coin must be as close to the government product as possible. That means proper gold content, alloy, design, etc. So a coin which has a low collector's value will be better protected against a good forgery. There is just not enough profit in the process to justify the risks involved.

The new collector should understand that every part of the design on a coin is there for a reason.

The first true coins were nothing more than crude bullion bars with a stamp placed on them by the local king guaranteeing their weight and fineness. The problem of counterfeiting immediately arose (for monetary rather than numismatic purposes), so a more intricate design had to be employed to deter this.

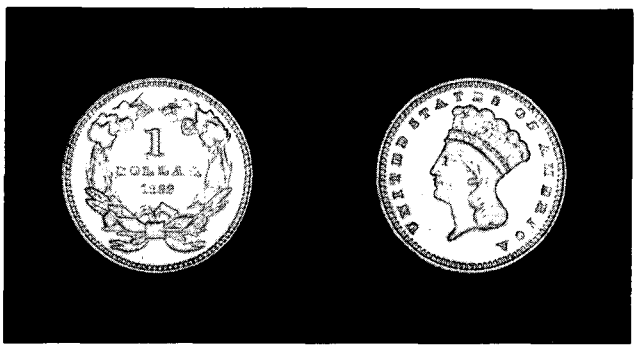
But the scoundrels didn't lose any sleep over this. They just found a way around the problem. The first thing they did was plane gold off the face of the coin. To combat this, mints employed dies which raised the design above the field. Then the dishonest fellows shaved metal off the edge or "clipped" the coin. To put a stop to this, the mints put designs or *reeding* on the edge. But the cheaters could not be convinced to quit. They took a scoring tool and stripped the gold away from the coin right around the rim. So the mints retaliated by putting *denticles* around the rim, and thus we come up with the modern coin.

The typical forgery is made in a small private mint. Many are cast replicas and most of these can be easily detected. Casting by any process causes distortion brought on by the cooling of the metal. Sandcast coins tend to have highly irregular fields and look mottled to the naked eye. More difficult to detect are counterfeits made in a centrifugal casting machine. This process is called "lost wax" casting, and it can be tough to spot without a glass. Under a glass, the field is once again likely to appear irregular, and inspection with a 30 power microscope will usually disclose a number of small craters formed when residual air bubbles burst as the coin cooled. The designs are likely to appear smaller than what is proper, but forgers often take this into account and enlarge them so that the cooled, contracted end product will appear to be correct.

**Photo A.** *Both of these coins are counterfeit. The 1868 gold dollar (right) is a crude, sand-cast copy, probably not even solid gold. The 1900 half eagle (left) is a much better fake.*

The coins in Photo A are good examples of common fakes. The gold dollar on the right is a crude sandcast copy, probably not even solid gold. The mottling of the surface is visible, even in the photo. The half eagle at left is a lost wax job; the color of the gold (which does not show in the photo) indicates it is of Lebanese origin, probably brought back by some foreign traveler and smuggled through customs. Under a microscope, the craters are evident. In addition, the stars are wrong, along with the rim (appears to be sawed off a bar). Finally, the pit in front of the ear is apparently a casting mark.

As I have said, a counterfeiter is caught by his mistakes. These occur either because the mint used is inadequate to the task or because the faker is ignorant. As a general rule, collectors are somewhat unwilling to talk about those mistakes that are made out of ignorance. Otherwise the counterfeiter might get the word and go back and do the job over — and do it right this time. Instances of this are on record.



*U.S. 1862-P $1.00 gold coin, "L" Type III.*

One can be a little bit more liberal in talking about errors that occur from an inadequate manufactory. No counterfeiter can set up his own mint complete with presses, dies, rolling mills, punches, assay office, etc. Such installations are just too difficult to hide for any great length of time — one might as well put up a billboard on the White House lawn! Common errors of this type include uneven reeding, edge over the rim (caused by forcing an unreeded cast coin through a broach), blunt or irregular stars, splitting along the edge or through the coin (caused by shrinkage — not to be confused with die cracks, where metal is *raised* above the surface of the coin), and weak or irregular denticles. One should also be on the lookout for tooling marks such as saw strokes or casting spurs.

By far, the most difficult fakes to detect are those that begin as genuine government coins. Counterfeiters take one of Uncle Sam's own masterpieces and then turn it into another one of Uncle Sam's masterpieces. Some of the more common alterations: addition or removal of mintmark, recutting of date or replacement of same, removal of designer's initials, addition or removal of other special marks. Some of these are easy to detect (e.g., turning a four into a one leaves too great a space between "one" and previous number); others require special knowledge (e.g., removal or addition of mint marks for early American coins revealed by striking characteristics of the coin — branch mints used inferior presses and the resulting work was of lower quality than comparable Philadelphia coins); still others require the opinion of an expert who

either has access to a good fake library (such as Stack's in New York) or to transparencies made from known genuine coins or the original dies (no two dies are ever exactly alike, even if made by the same man using the same machine). And, if that fails, the only thing one can do is send the coin to ANACS (American Numismatic Association Certification Service) or to the government for their opinion.

## GRADING A COIN

After genuineness, the greatest problem confronting the new collector is grading the condition of the coin. Coins come in all conditions from brand new to flat. Obviously, a collector would prefer to have a brand new coin rather than one that is badly worn. Furthermore, the mechanics of money and exchange contribute to the steep rise in prices paid for the higher quality pieces. When coins leave the mint, they are all new or "uncirculated." As they are used in transactions, they gradually become worn down to the point where they are no longer useful as money. Indeed, it might be noted just in passing, that one of the original purposes for putting complex designs on coins was to give the local businessmen an indication of how close to the established weight the piece actually was. Presumably, after the coin had worn down to the point where the design was no longer legible, such a piece was no longer "guaranteed," and, so, had to be weighed for bullion.

Most collectors begin on limited budgets and so are restricted to buying coins in the lower conditions: good, very good, and fine. As a result, they never learn to grade a coin properly. The condition of a coin is determined by what it *has* rather than by what it has not got. The wear accumulating on a coin in circulation can only be realistically judged by knowing what the coin looked like when it was new. But most collectors, particularly new ones, tend to judge the new coins by that with which they are familiar, i.e., the worn ones. This is like trying to build the Empire State Building from the top down. Invariably, such a person becomes an easy mark for a dealer who practices *overgrading* — claiming a coin to be in better condition than it actually is, with a correspondingly higher price.

The best way to not fall into this trap from the beginning is to do a little initial research on how coins wear. So, before you go out and buy any coins, find someone in your area who has a *proof.* A proof is a specimen striking made by the mint expressly for collectors. These coins are made from dies that come from the same master as the dies used for business strikes, but the coins are struck, usually twice, on hydraulic presses under greater pressure than coins made for general circulation. Because of this, a proof will carry the full impressions of the die. Compared to a business strike, the relief of the portrait will be exceptionally bold. There should be no flat spots or fuzziness in any of the designs. The rim will have come up fully with the corners knife-like, like this: [, as opposed to the rim of a business strike, which tends to look like this: (. Proof coins are made from specially polished blanks or "planchets" and are struck on polished dies. As a result, the coins tend to have a mirror-like surface not found on other coins struck under less managed conditions. In addition, the first coins to come off the press prior to the first polishing of the dies display a frosted appearance on all of the raised parts of the design. Since 1955, the United States Government has issued proof coins in sets sealed in plastic. I strongly recommend that all new collectors buy at least one of the cheaper of these sets (1961, 1962, or 1963), even if one does not wish to specialize in the modern designs. Such a set will serve as a handy reminder of what is possible in medallic art.

For those who wish to collect gold coins, you have a problem: all American gold proofs are rare. I know of none that sell for less than $500.00 (and that's a single coin). In addition, proofs made since 1908, when the designs were changed, have a different surface from that found on modern or "brilliant" proofs. So finding a gold brilliant proof is not going to be easy. Nevertheless, it is well worth the effort.

*U.S. 1911-D $2½ gold piece*

One thing a person should be careful about in searching out old proofs: back in the nineteenth century, when economic upheaval was an every-year worry, gold proofs had a tendency to get spent. If the proof was reclaimed right away, it might be returned to a collection in impaired state, i.e., it will sport hairline scratches or some surface wear. But, if one finds a gold proof that is still totally frosted, then he will know that the coin is still in original condition. This is because there is no known way to replace the original surface once it has been worn or toned away.

A proof will show what detail is possible with the dies being used, but, because it is made differently, it would be unfair to compare it directly with a common business strike. So, once one has looked at a proof, he should also try to obtain a business strike in mint state (also called *gem uncirculated* or *MS70).* A mint state coin is a regular business strike still in the exact same condition as it was when it

was struck. A coin is either in mint state or it is not. Mint state is the only coin grade that is precisely defined. Because it is struck under lower pressure than a proof, a mint state business strike will not have as bold a detail. Still, it should have no scratches, nicks, or dents. Instead of the mirror surface and frosted detail characteristic of a proof, a mint state business strike will sport what is known as luster or "bloom." This is a deep rich coloring which extends outward from the center of the coin. When the coin is tilted in soft light, it will appear to be on fire. This surface is imparted to the coin when struck, and there is no way to duplicate it once it has been worn or toned away, short of restriking the coin. The surface of the coin actually becomes plastic as the metal is forced into the recessions of the die, assuming a characteristic microscopic flow or "scratch" pattern which causes the luster.

*U.S. 1889-P Half Eagle, $5.00 gold piece.*

Once a coin is placed into circulation, a steady process of deterioration sets in. If the coins are placed unrolled in bags, as was the case with silver dollars and many gold coins, they will become scratched or dented with "bag marks." Such marks are apt to look like this: ((((, and are caused when the bag is moved around, the coin on top digging into the coin below, then being displaced and digging in again. Loose coins are also likely to pick up rim nicks as they strike the other coins edge on. Obviously, the more scratches, nicks, or dents in a coin, the worse its condition will be judged to be. *No* coin displaying such marks can be called gem. If the coin has just a few scratches or marks, it will be called *choice uncirculated* or *MS65.* Coins with a number of scratches are still called *uncirculated* or *MS60,* particularly if they are of a denomination and type commonly stored unwrapped in bags (e.g., early half dollars, silver dollars of the Morgan type, and gold coins made prior to 1908 with the exception of double eagles which were stored in bags *after* 1908 but rolled prior to then). However, prominent bag marks will cause the grade to be lowered to about uncirculated or AU on any coin.

Coins should be examined under a 10-power glass. A person should *never* trust his own unaided eyesight. I do not care how good one's eyes are, they are not good enough. Glasses more powerful than 10X are available, but I do not find them to be of that great an advantage, for, as the power of the glass increases, the width of the field decreases. One pays for the greater accuracy of the higher power glass with the lower accuracy which comes from not being able to see a large portion of the coin.

## AN EXPERIMENT

The best way to see how a coin wears down is to wear a few down on one's own. So go to the bank and invest 50 cents in a roll of brand new pennies. One should examine a few of them under the glass in order to determine what they look like when new. Put five of the cents aside where they will not rub or be damaged in any other way. Then place another 15 or so in a purse or pocket and carry them around for at least a week, examining them at the end of each day. At the end of a week, compare them with the control group that was stashed away. The cents that were carried around should quickly pick up scratches and a few dents. Run the edge of a thumbnail around the rim of the coin. One should find some rim nicks on at least a couple of the pieces. Examine the high spots of the coin, e.g., the cheek and jaw of Lincoln. One should be able to pick up a little wear on at least a few of the specimens (the half life of cents is about 12 years, so one will have to look carefully). Notice that each coin will be worn differently. That is why grading is such a personal thing, in spite of the general standards. The overall condition of any coin can only be determined by judging the sum of all the defects, both on the obverse and the reverse.

Now, take some more new cents from the remainder of the roll and place them reverse down in a wooden drawer so they can touch edge to edge but not face to face. Slide them around by swirling the drawer so that the coins skid over the wood. After awhile, the reverses will show flat spots evenly distributed over the reverse of the coin while the obverse will still be new. Prior to the invention of coin holders, many people kept their coins stored in this manner, lying loose in a drawer. When they would open the drawer to show off their treasure to others, the coins would slide around and pick up this kind of wear. Stacking coins, particularly double eagles made after 1908, will also place this kind of wear on a coin (notice how, on almost any Saint-Gaudens $20, the breasts and knee of Liberty are worn flat, even on "uncirculated" pieces). Such wear is called *stacking wear* or cabinet friction, and a coin that has been subjected to it must be graded as no better than AU.

Copper is particularly subject to tarnishing, and if you happened to touch the face of a few of the cents with your fingers in placing the coins in your pocket, a few might already have become discolored. If so, this should impress upon the new collector never to handle collectable coins without gloves. I prefer white cotton gloves, but I doubt

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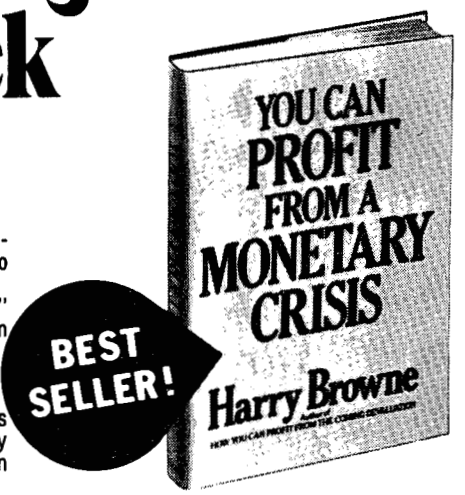


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- ✻ Silver: will it necessarily follow the price of gold? One way silver surpasses other recommended investments. 2 possible risks. 3 ways to invest — but only 2 recommended. Silver coins: when is your risk minimal?
- ✻ "Hot" and "cold" currencies. Opportunities—and risks — in both. 4 rules for picking the strongest currencies. 26 major currencies compared. Table of potential gain—or loss—for all 26 currencies
- ✻ Recommended brokers, investment counsellors, newsletters, coin dealers, books
- ✻ 7 ways to safeguard your financial privacy
- ✻ 7 benefits of a Swiss bank account **for the average man.** 5 recommended banks. 7 types of account — all perfectly legal. Glossary of terms used by Swiss banks. Numbered accounts. Negative interest. 3 kinds of Swiss bank: which is best for you? Step-by-step: how to open a Swiss account. Is there a danger that Swiss funds could be frozen? 5 other investments in Switzerland. One firm that helps you cope with dealings abroad
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☐ Please also send Harry Browne's *How You Can Profit from the Coming Devaluation* at the Club discount price of $4.49—an example of the savings I'll enjoy as a Club member.

that colored ones will hurt. Stay away from wool. Wool is animal hair – a very hard substance – and can scratch the specimen.

If a situation should arise where a coin must be handled without gloves, it should be held by the edge between thumb and forefinger. Do not allow the fingers to come in contact with either face of the coins as the acids in the fingerprints will etch the surface. This is true even for gold coins since they are usually alloyed with copper.

If the cents were allowed to wear down further, they would eventually become very fine, then fine, very good, good, fair, and finally poor. As the determination of these lower grades is much discussed and readily available, I shall not go into them here. Except for coins that are particularly rare and cannot readily be had in the higher conditions, it is my opinion that coins purchased for investment as well as enjoyment should not be obtained in grades lower than extremely fine. It is always better to spend a lot of money on one quality item than to spend little on a lot of junk. Coins in the lower grades are usually bought by small-time collectors who cannot afford anything better. Because such coins are usually slow movers, and because of handling costs, bookkeeping, etc., dealers cannot pay anywhere near the market price for these items. As a result, they have a very poor profit records.

## CHOOSING A DEALER

It is important to become associated with a dealer whom you can trust. This is particularly true for those who are new, and picking a home dealer is probably the most important decision one has to make early on. In order to be of use to you, a dealer must be honest and be willing to go out of his way to get the pieces or type of material you want. In addition, he should have a good grip on what is going on in the short-term market. And, of course, he should be willing to tell you about it.

It is easy to test a dealer's honesty. Honest dealers do not overgrade. Just remember there is no one system of grading because no two coins wear down exactly alike, so minor differences of opinion are bound to arise. When in doubt, stick to your own system. But recognize that a dealer grades his own way, and that he is not a crook just because his system is slightly different than yours. If there is a big difference, however, then stay away from him. This sort of fellow will leave you holding the bag.

Another person I would be wary about is the double-grader. All of us try to get the most for our dollars, and coin dealers are no exception. But the double-grader is a special kind of pest. Such a person uses a very strict system when he is buying and a very loose one when he is selling. As far as I am concerned, such a dealer cannot be trusted. Sooner or later, he will stick you with a lemon.

Also beware of the person who misuses "split-grading." All coins tend to wear down gradually, and there is no one point that can absolutely be defined as "fine." The Brown & Dunn standards establish minimum criteria for specific grades, e.g., very good – three letters of LIBERTY must show; fine – all of LIBERTY must show. But such systems leave a large gap between the two grades. What of the coins that have 4, 5, or 6 letters in LIBERTY showing? All are VG-F. But anyone who says they are all equally valuable is either fibbing or joking. And, as a general rule, anyone who asks half again the price for half again the grade is asking too much, particularly if one is considering the higher grades.

Another fellow to stay away from is the dealer who sells cleaned or "whizzed" coins without saying they are cleaned or whizzed. By cleaning, I do not mean soaking a coin in solvent to remove grease, dirt, or oil. A cleaned coin is one that has been dipped in a chemical compound or polished with paste to remove tarnish. A whizzed coin has actually been buffed or etched with an acid or even reingraved so as to disguise wear. *Coins held for investment purposes should never be cleaned or polished other than what is necessary to remove foreign matter.* Cleaning coins is an art in itself, and, until one learns how, all I can say is *don't do it.* A collector can tell when a coin has been cleaned, and many – particularly the old-timers – do not like it. Most whizzed coins can be detected with a 10-power glass, and I have never seen one that can escape detection with a 30-power microscope.

## TIPS ON BUYING

Volumes could be written on what are the best buys in coins today, and I won't try to add to that here. Basically, I believe a person should collect what appeals to him, and use his common sense – don't think you will make money saving Lincoln Memorial cents when over 6 billion are made every year (by comparison, the largest yearly mintage of half eagles *ever* was 5,708,802 in 1881 – and most of these have since been melted); and stay away from government promotions (Uncle Sam has discovered that many coin collectors are big suckers when it comes to new releases – witness the Carson City dollar fiasco). I happen to collect gold coins, particularly Coronet half eagles, by die variety (that makes me something of a screwball – only about 20 people in the country do that). A knowledgeable person can make a lot of money doing that. But I do it first because I like it. Which is probably why I make money. The following list gives some beginner-oriented comments on United States gold coins in general. And libertarians might also be particularly interested in collecting the private or "territorial" issues from back in the gold-rush days. Rare pieces and a present small market make for a lot of room to get rich in.

**$3 gold pieces**

*All very rare, particularly in Unc.* Caveat emptor! *Overgrading is very common due to the large spread between AU and Unc. Present demand low, mostly type material.*

**Gold dollars**

*Type II rarest of all regular issue gold ($4 pieces are patterns). Uncs. can run $3,000 or more. Best buys are Type I's. They are about twice as rare as the equally priced Type III's. Again,* caveat emptor!

**Quarter eagles**

*Indian series most popular gold series by date, there being only 15 coins with only one rare one, 1911D. This last one a good buy at less than $1,000. Presently sells from $900 up. Coronets are tough to get, particularly top quality. Very underpriced. They are the most uncommon of the commonly available gold.*

**Half eagles**

*Only United States coin made in all mints. Coronets sport all mintmarks, are popular for this reason. All Uncs. prior to 1879 are scarce. Series is of medium rarity. Indians are becoming very popular due to the low number in the series and the incuse design. 1908 S, 1909 O, and 1911 D are rare, particularly Unc. At least 100 but probably less than 150 1929's extant. Most are from two hoarded rolls and Unc. Price revolves around $3,000.*

**Eagles**

*Indians rank with coronet 2½'s in availability. Coronets a bit more common, but not particularly popular, being saved primarily for type sets and bullion. Both tens and twenties usually come heavily marked.*

**Double eagles**

*Liberties and Saint-Gaudens of equal availability, as common as Indian 2½'s (those who could get their gold to Switzerland in 1933-4 chose the biggest coins to save). Bullion and type material, mostly.*

The 1911 D quarter eagle and 1909 O, 1911 D half eagles are commonly faked. Forgers usually start with a genuine coin from another mint, so it is best to have these certified by ANACS or the government. It will help when you sell them later.

I have a standing policy with regard to finding fakes on dealers' shelves — turn it over to the Secret Service. Any professional dealer should know the difference between real and fake (or at least ought to be better at it than I am). If the guy was fooled but legitimate, then he will be educated. And if he isn't legitimate, he will *really* be educated. Once one knows what he is doing, this is a good policy to adopt. The government isn't bad *all* the time.

In summation, then: (a) learn to grade properly; (b) know your coins and everything about them; (c) find a dealer you can trust; (d) buy the best quality you can find and afford; and (e) use your head for something beside separating your ears. These are the secrets to profitable investments in numismatics. And you will find the subject rewarding in other ways as well.

One final word of advice: the various state governments are cracking down on the imposition of sales taxes on coin sales. Taxes in excess of three percent can destroy any of your short-term profits before you ever see them. I will simply point out that no state may legally impose a tax on any article that is exported from that state, nor may it tax any imported article for any amount greater than is necessary to carry out its inspection laws. How you dodge the tax is your problem. ◻

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**SELECTED REFERENCES**


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- Don Taxey, *Scott's Comprehensive Catalogue and Encyclopedia of U.S. Coins, 1971,* Scott Publishing Co., New York.
- Walter Thompson, *How United States Coins Are Made,* Hewitt Bros., Chicago.
- R. S. Yeoman, *A Guide Book of United States Coins,* 28th ed., Western Publishing Co., Racine, WI, 1974. One should try to get back issues from local dealers. "Red Book" prices for rare material are not always accurate and all prices listed are out of date by publishing time, but the books are the reference backbone of the hobby.

In addition, the new collector should try to get a few auction catalogues throughout the year, particularly the ANA Auction (handled this year by Paramount International Coin Co., Englewood, OH).

ANACS (American Numismatic Association Certification Service), Box 87, Ben Franklin Station, Washington, DC 20044. Write first for schedule of fees.

Coins sent to the government should be sent to: Technical Staff, United States Mint, Dept. of the Treasury, Washington, D.C. *Coins deemed counterfeit will be turned over to the Secret Service and not returned.*

Always send coins by registered mail in protective packaging. Store coins in a safe place like a safety deposit box. *Coin collections are not covered by normal insurance policies.*


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*Robert B. Crim has collected coins for over 10 years; his specialty is United States half eagles, coronet type.*

# Roger Lea MacBride

*In 1972, an elector from Virginia, Roger MacBride, gained fame in the libertarian movement by casting his Electoral College vote for Libertarian Party candidates John Hospers and Tonie Nathan. Since then, Mr. MacBride has become increasingly active in libertarian politics and is the person most frequently mentioned as the 1976 Libertarian Party Presidential nominee. The following is his analysis of the opportunities and problems facing American politics in general and the Libertarian Party in particular in the years to come in light of the November elections. (For detailed election coverage, see "Frontlines" this issue.)*

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The bands used to strike up that song whenever Al Smith's name was put into nomination. He's gone, with his opposition to Prohibition and the Big Boys, but the Libertarian Party is here with analogous, but much more sophisticated goals. *Can it succeed?*

It seems extraordinary that barely two and a half years after the founding of a new political party, anyone could seriously put forth the proposition that as a political movement it could, and increasingly likely will, transform political relationships and attitudes in the nation during the decade to come. The speed with which the LP has gathered force is perhaps exceeded only by the period encompassing the birth of the Republican Party in the 1850's. While in both cases the rate of growth was based upon the validity and vitality of party purposes, and the fact that the time was and is suddenly present to implement moral and praxeological goals by political means, both were enormously aided by purely fortuitous events. Let's examine the future of *political* libertarianism.

## THE EARLY YEARS

In June of 1972 a group of less than 100 libertarians met in Colorado at a meeting called by David and Susan Nolan. During the short time the group was together they organized as a political convention, adopted a party platform, and chose Presidential and Vice-Presidential candidates. That year the Party actually achieved a ballot status in two Western States; the candidates were able to travel to a number of engagements throughout the United States, and achieved perhaps 10,000 votes on election day.

I, who had been a libertarian since high school days (via the Rose Wilder Lane-Albert J. Nock tradition, rather than the Ayn Rand route) had been in that year a Presidential Elector for the State of Virginia. Years earlier I had written a book on the origins and history of the Electoral College (still in print: *The American Electoral College,* Caxton Printers, Ltd., Caldwell, Idaho), and of course was thoroughly aware that such Electors were expected by those who wrote the Federal Constitution to use their best judgment as to who in fact ought to be elected to the national offices. I did, with the result that the Libertarian Party, with one electoral vote, came in third in the Presidential election — barely 16 votes behind the second-place Democrats.

Reporters for the various news organizations were astounded and interested. Some of them, like a columnist for *Newsweek* who described himself (accurately) as a former "flaming New Dealer" confessed their disillusionment with liberalism as practiced during that period and with its results during the years which followed. They were open to the idealism of our political philosophy, which embodied in considerable part the old-liberal hopes together with a consistent and practical means for achieving them. Such newsmen might then have thought us quixotic, but nonetheless intriguing.

For whatever reasons, the party began rapidly to grow during 1973; state parties popped into being that year and during 1974 like popcorn. At the national Libertarian Party's Executive Committee meeting at the end of November 1974, there were about 40 recognized State parties. Of course, some of these are mewling newborns, with naught but promise, but others are lusty infants and some even robust youngsters.

In May 1973 the Libertarian Party held its second national convention. A holiday Inn in a Cleveland suburb was the site for an attendance of perhaps 150, and it probably set an all time record for official speeches delivered — long and short, I recall at least 80! Nonetheless work *did* get done, friendships and relationships were formed, and ideas and techniques flew back and forth. The atmosphere was one of optimism and vitality.

November of 1973 saw Francine Youngstein, the nominee of the Free Libertarian Party (to avoid confusion with the existing New York State Liberal Party, the word Free prefixes Libertarian there) of New York for mayor of New York City, come in fifth in a field of nine candidates. Of course, her vote total was small as compared with the major party candidates, but she did come very close to a total exceeding that of all the Marxist minor party candidates combined!

Perhaps the most impressive result of the FLP campaign was the significant amount of favorable media comment received. The New York press corps became permanently aware of, and sensitized to the concerns of libertarianism, and particularly to the victimless crimes issues upon which the campaign laid emphasis. A book published by the FLP after the campaign contains some of the newspaper coverage: libertarian solutions to some of the festering problems of city life received wide and sympathetic attention, leading indeed to many dialogues based on the subject matter of libertarian ideas rather than the old collectivist notions.

In 1974 the Libertarian Party launched more than 40 candidates for Federal, state, and local offices across the nation.

The goals of the candidacies varied. Some even believed they had a serious chance of election (none came close). Hal Jindrich, running in the nonpartisan election for California State Superintendent of

Schools, conceived the effort as primarily educational. Hal put out some marvelous material on education, and got just over 200,000 votes, which makes him the Party's top vote-getter to date. In other

races the effort was to achieve interim goals — in California, John Hospers, nominated to succeed Mr. Reagan, put on a party-building campaign.

Reporters for tv and newspapers in most of the locales of these races were beginning to buzz with interest about the potential of the Libertarian Party. Though the buzz was more that of bees contemplating a swarm than the sound of the swarm itself, it was impressive. Very few yet saw libertarianism as a wave of the future, but most were sufficiently impressed (and genuinely sympathetic) to provide coverage far disproportionate to the Party's then strength. *Newsweek,* in a one-pager with photos on the Libertarian Party, asserted November 11th that it "has the virtue of consistency — a quality that is winning it converts from the grays of political moderation."

## GETTING SERIOUS

It's fair to say that the Party is in 1975 entering the third phase of its history. The first was perhaps a lark, a joyous adventure by a small group who likely neither cared greatly about the political mechanism nor took its workings with particular seriousness. Getting the Party on the ballot in a few states, getting Presidential and Vice-Presidential candidates on the road, and trying to spread the message — psychologically was a glorious experience for those who during their lifetimes had faced only choices between collectivisms, a choice between the smirks of HHH and the scowls of RMN.

Phase two was the effort to capitalize on the perhaps somewhat unexpected viability of the LP. Enthusiasm in many states, the lengthy processes of organizing Parties, preparing platforms, passing resolutions, setting up committees and newsletters, initiating and participating in campaigns and petition drives — all were activities that naturally occur to enthusiastic and intelligent minds eager to spread libertarian ideas and lay a foundation for something bigger. Substantial and very even-handed nation-wide news coverage resulted.

Now phase three is at hand: the effort to meld together a serious, professional effort to make a national impression on the political process. Passing the question of whether the LP yet has the personnel and funds with which to pursue that course, what are the objective prospects that the Libertarian Party *could* be a major one in a much nearer future than any of us might a short time ago have dreamed?

We are the beneficiaries — if we know how to take advantage of it — of extraordinary timing.

Not since FDR's smashing victory in 1936 have so many pundits publicly questioned the future of the Republican Party — not only Larry O'Brien, ultra-savvy former chairman of the Democratic Party (who also raised doubts about *its* survival), not only the President of the United States prior to election day (and that's got to be a first — even Millard Fillmore only whispered in corners his fear for the demise of the Whigs), but hundreds and even thousands of lesser political figures and commentators. The smashing election reverses suffered by the Republicans seem to me to have borne out these hopeful or fearful prognoses (depending on the viewpoint of the prognosticator). The GOP holds only a touch more than a fourth of the seats in the House of Representatives. Its Senate delegation was decimated about as far as it can be in any one election year. Republican gubernatorial hopefuls were plowed under regardless of party "wings"; in New York incumbent liberal Republican Governor Wilson was smashed in the highest percentage victory of the century by unknown liberal Democratic challenger Carey; in staid Vermont incumbent liberal Democratic Salmon crushed challenger conservative Republican Walter Kennedy by a 7-5 margin; nationwide the Democrats won 28 State Houses to the Republicans' 7.

What chance is there of a comeback? The prospect would be inviting if the Grand Old Party *stood* for something, but it doesn't and hasn't for many a year. That's in great contrast to the situation following 1936, when the Republican Party could and did rally in general opposition to New Deal policies. Not so today: the policies being advocated and carried out in Washington by both parties are virtually identical, and to prevent possible revitalization the Republicans are festooned with an albatross named Ford.

In my opinion there is an overwhelming likelihood that the GOP is in fact a chicken whose head has been cut off. It will run around on its two feet, flap its wings, bang this way and that, run here, run there, seeking something, seeking anything, until finally in spasms it collapses into final permanent oblivion. Whether that last will occur by 1978 or 1982 is immaterial; the end is inevitable.

Of course victory of such an overwhelming nature does not necessarily bode well for the fortunes of the Democratic party. There is a tendency, in a Washington landscape apparently populated entirely by members of one political persuasion, for new factions to form, plugging for divergent goals. After all, the spoils will just stretch so far; who's to get them, thee or me? Particularly this tendency is so since the Democratic Party has been an umbrella sheltering many different points of view, united only by the single purpose of defeating the "other guys."

We have, looking toward 1976, a Democratic Party moving back under the control of what has traditionally been its largest or most powerful faction: the organized labor unions and their allies. In November the unions scored their biggest victory in history: 7 out of every 10 candidates they backed for major office won. Already some of those who were attracted — however foolishly — to the ideals represented by Eugene McCarthy in 1968 and George McGovern in 1972 are talking about an exit to set up a new ultra-liberal opposition group.

And contrary-wise, should to everyone's amazement the "eggheads" capture

the Democratic convention again in 1976, it seems more than likely that the labor groups would finally go ahead with what's been talked about for so many decades, and establish here some form of counterpart to the British Labor Party.

## SCENARIOS

Therefore one scenario is that the Republican Party, reduced to something like 25 percent of the strength of the Democratic Party, fields a ticket in 1976 against a "compromise" ticket of the Democrats, which is sufficiently successful to hold that party together against all but fragmentary opposition. Of course that scenario calls for tickets of the ilk of Ford-Rockefeller on the one hand, and Jackson-McCarthy on the other (I don't necessarily mean those particular individuals, but the forces which they represent). In my view this represents the optimum situation electorally for the Libertarian Party. Where in either of those groupings is a glimmer of the individualist ideal? To which party can those repair who believe in a free economy, let alone those who believe in personal freedom from state-enforced "social" laws?

To us. That is, if the leadership and the membership of the Party exhibits a consistency of principle and a steadiness of purpose such as to convince the waverers and wonderers. No party, and least of all ours with its doctrines harking back to the first American revolution, can hope to attract a wide base of support without projecting an image of intelligence, professionalism, and wisdom. Provided we do these things, there is no reason why the Libertarian Party in 1976 cannot attract a million, and even more, votes from those who see it then and foresee it for the future as the replacement for the dying Republican Party.

The other scenario is superficially different, but fundamentally embodies the same opportunities — although more problems — for the Libertarian Party. It is that the Republican Party fields a Ford–Rockefeller style ticket, and that Ronald Reagan's vague threats voiced in October 1974 to run on a conservative third party platform materialize. And additionally, that the Democratic ticket does not manage a compromise sufficient to keep, however sullenly, the McCarthy-McGovern people in line, and another "third" party, this one of dewy-eyed liberals, is fielded. The latter would probably *not* be headed by one of the more leftist senators, most of whom are too pragmatic to throw away a career on such a doomed adventure, but more likely a nothing-to-lose Eugene McCarthy with his somewhat frayed charisma.

*That's* a tougher situation for the LP, because while the Democrats would doubtless win handily, there would be better known names than ours in the voting booth for those who broadly regard themselves as conservatives, or as free-life-style-idealists. The Party would have its work cut out to convince Americans in large enough numbers that in social matters the conservatives border on totalitarianism, and in economic matters the liberals do likewise. I predict that the Libertarian Party would receive a better press than either of the latter; the representatives of the news organizations would perceive both the hopelessness of a Reagan-Buckley style conservative movement, and the quixotry of a 1968-style leftist movement in 1976. But whether that sort of attention from the media would translate into a million votes or more in 1976 is open to some question.

But while the Libertarian Party vote total might be somewhat lower in the second scenario, I think there's no question but that it would establish the Party as the surviving opposition movement in 1978 and thereafter. It's not conceivable that a significant Reagan conservative movement as such would survive a 1976 campaign (there can be little doubt that its fate would be akin to that of the Wallace party following the 1968 campaign). And the shimmering material of which the leftist campaign would be composed will, because of its lack of enduring and believable values, have been rent very shortly after the election of 1976. Thus, in a scenario akin to the second, the Party's growth might very well be less spectacular initially, but quite possibly more so in the latter part of the decade.

Certainly as a movement with the potential to fill the vacuum caused by the deteriorating structure of the two major parties, we have no significant competition at the present time. The decline in the fortunes of the American party, now split in two, suggests that it is the last lap of a wave of the past. The People's Party, a one-issue group formed in 1972 to oppose involvement in the Vietnamese war, like the single-issue Free Soil Party of 1848, had but one chance to ring the big gong, and it is forever gone. The various socialist and communist factional groups? The only thing to do with their members is to shake them gently, turn on a loud alarm clock, and wake them up.

So far as I'm aware there's no other presently organized political movement on a wider scale than a single state. The Farmer-Labor Party of Minnesota and the Conservative Party of New York have long since lost their dynamics; both survive now on compromise, confusion, and cooperation with the major parties.

Indeed I think the current political situation has numerous points of resemblance with that of the 1850's. The Republican Party has been a minority party for the last generation and more, winning only occasionally; the Whig Party (with its program of Federal spending on "internal improvements," protectionism, tendency toward monopoly capitalism, a central bank, etc.) had similarly been a minority party for the previous generation, winning now and then but not very often. The last Whig president, Millard Fillmore, became such in the middle of the Presidential term, in July 1850. The last Republican President, Jerry Ford, became such in the middle of the Presidential term, in August 1974. President Fillmore, knowing the Whig Party was in trouble, sought to bring to his support the Southern political leaders who wanted to be able to extend human chattel slavery to new states in the northwestern part of the United States. In implementation thereof he and they secured the passage of the notorious Kansas-Nebraska Act. With the Republican Party in trouble, President Ford has sought to make common cause with the liberal (so-called) financial establishment which has long dominated the politics of the northeast of the United States. In implementation thereof he has nominated the notorious Nelson Rockefeller for the Vice-Presidency, and has proposed no inflation-fighting measure which would cause the least crack in the foundations of those interests.

In the 1850's, the reaction was very swift. A new party convention was held in Wisconsin in 1854, and by 1856 (a Presidential year) many ex-Whigs, some angry Democrats, and others held a second convention. They called themselves Republicans to recall the Jeffersonian ideals of the beginning of the century, and they nominated explorer John C. Fremont of California as their Presidential candidate. Of course the party didn't win in competition with the Democrats and Millard Fillmore who, the Whigs having crumbled in the 1852 election, ran as the candidate of the Know Nothing Party. But in the ensuing four years in state and local elections the Republican Party gained ground; in 1860 it got 39 percent of the vote which, because the opposition was split three ways, actually enabled their candidate (Lincoln) to walk into the White House.

It's in the nature of the lesser polarization of Americans over a single issue now than then, the expanded size of this country, the diversity of opinions expressed instantly to everyone over the electronic as well as the printed media, and many other factors, that we shall not move from a dream to political victory in six years. But the very real prospect exists that the job might be done in twice the time, which would make 1984 *our* year, and not Big Brother's.

It seems to me that this *is* the time for a new political tidal wave in American history. In the past such waves have occurred irregularly, gathering speed at differing rates. Now not only insiders but outsiders are beginning to think that it may be the LP which is destined to break through the dikes this time. In a *Washington Post* column late in October 1974, Nicholas von Hoffman said, "It's too early to hope out loud that the Libertarians will be able to become the major opponents of the Reprocrats in a reconstituted two-party system, but for the over-taxed, over-regulated, over-burdened and underpowered millions of the American middle class, they're the only people worth voting for." We have the opportunity, we have the principles; do we have the will and the skill to make tomorrow ours? ◻

# editorial

## FRIEDRICH VON HAYEK AND THE NOBEL PRIZE IN ECONOMICS

For almost three quarters of a century, the Nobel Prize has been awarded to the greatest minds in literature, the natural sciences and in the pursuit of peace.

In 1968, Riksbank, a Swedish bank celebrating its 300th anniversary, established a Nobel Prize for economic science. And beginning in 1969, the recipients have included Paul Samuelson, Simon Kuznets, Kenneth Arrow, John R. Hicks and Wassily Leontief.

The common denominator among the award holders is their general acceptance of the Keynesian framework, a belief in the validity of State intervention in economic affairs and the use of mathematical, static models that almost always have little relevance for understanding complex economic phenomena.

Thus, it came as no surprise when it was announced in October that the 1974 award had been given to the Swedish economist Gunnar Myrdal. For half a century, Professor Myrdal has been one of the most vocal and prominent advocates of socialism and welfare statism. Serving in the Swedish Parliament in the 1930's, he helped design that nation's welfare system. He acted as Commerce Minister from 1945 to 1947 and headed the U.N. Economic Commission for 10 years. His prominence in the public eye is due to his 1944 study of American racial problems, *An American Dilemma,* and *Asian Drama: An Inquiry Into the Poverty of Nations* in 1968. (Less well known is the fact that Myrdal was a Nazi sympathizer in the 1930's, publicly describing Nazism as the movement of youth and the movement of the future).

But what came as a surprise was the economist chosen to share this year's award with Myrdal. For his "pioneering work in the theory of money and economic fluctuations" and for his "penetrating analysis of the interdependence of economic, social and institutional phenomena," Sweden's Royal Academy of Science awarded half of the $124,000 prize money to Friedrich von Hayek!

Professor Hayek thus became the first thorough-going free-market economist to receive the Prize. Born in Austria in 1899, he studied at the University of Vienna under the great Austrian School economist Ludwig von Mises and participated in the famous "Mises-Kreis" seminars of the 1920's and early 1930's. In 1927, at the age of 28, Hayek became the first Director of the Austrian Institute for Economic Research. Following a series of lectures on the Austrian Theory of the Trade Cycle in England, he was appointed to a position at the London School of Economics in 1931. In 1950, he moved to the University of Chicago where he stayed until 1962, when he took a position at the University of Frieburg, Germany. Since 1968, he has been Visiting Professor at the University of Salzburg, Austria.

In his first writings, Hayek was involved in a study of narrow, technical economics. Building upon the monetary and cyclical theories developed by Ludwig von Mises, he worked out a detailed and rigorous explanation of the business cycle and inflation. His investigations are presented in his works *Monetary Theory and the Trade Cycle, Prices and Production* and *Profits, Interest and Investment.*

In an attempt to stimulate economic activity, Hayek pointed out, the banking system—with government support—expands the quantity of money and credit and pushes down the interest rate. This increases investment in capital goods on the part of businesspeople. The price of labor and raw materials is bid up in these sectors of the economy. But as the money is received as wages and payment for resources, the recipients spend the newly created money on desired consumer goods, thus pushing up these prices as well. A contest then begins between those businessmen who are trying to obtain labor and resources for the production of capital goods and those entrepreneurs producing consumer goods. As long as the banking system continues to make new money available to the investment sector of the economy, it can keep in the race of rising prices for scarce resources. But when the fear of inflation finally results in the banks cutting back on increases of the money supply, many businesses find themselves to be unprofitable and misdirected. Thus, the source of inflation and severe economic fluctuations is government-supported increases in money and credit.

But as the ideal of Social Planning and Total Collectivist War became the dominating forces in the 1930's and 1940's, Hayek came to realize that a sound economic system could only be possible when balanced by equally correct social and political theories. The result of this insight has been a series of books including *The Road to Serfdom, The Constitution of Liberty, Studies in Philosophy, Politics and Economics* and *Law, Legislation and Liberty* (the first of three planned volumes).

In a world of imperfect knowledge, emphasized Hayek, with information vital to the economic and social progress of a community decentralized among millions of individuals, the idea of a central body planning and controlling social activity was preposterous. Only in a social framework in which every individual had the opportunity to offer that knowledge to others could all of society gain from his material and intellectual resources. And, in fact, it is through the market process that spontaneous order in which individuals attempt to cooperate and harmonize their interests, that cultural progress is brought about. For this reason Hayek defined competition as a discovery procedure.

The economics profession has been dominated by feelings of uneasiness for a long time. Its models of comparative statics and perfect competition that overlook the dynamic, purposeful nature of human action, in which individuals try to gain the knowledge they need for their ends; the Keynesian framework of economic aggregates that ignore the individual actors who are the underpinnings of economic activity; the Establishment assumption that inflation is excessive demand, rather than seeing that it is monetary expansion that creates a general rising of prices — all these problems, and more, have their solutions in the works of Friedrich von Hayek and the other members of the Austrian School. Perhaps the light of attention will now be shown on their theories with the awarding of this Nobel Prize. ◻

**RICHARD M. EBELING**

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*Guest Editorialist Richard Ebeling is a senior in Economics at Sacramento State University and an avid student of Austrian economics.*

# book review

*Persons who are seriously concerned with developing and spreading libertarian ideas—particularly among students, college professors, and others with possible "left-wing" leanings—should not only know their own ideology but those of their competitors as well. With that in mind REASON is pleased to present a discussion of some of the recent literature on Marxism and the Soviet system which we hope will aid any of our readers who wish to pursue further study on their own. Dr. Raico is a professor of history at State University College, Buffalo, New York.*

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## SOME RECENT BOOKS ON MARXISM AND COMMUNISM

**Reviewed by RALPH RAICO**

KARL MARX: HIS LIFE AND THOUGHT. By David McLellan. New York: Harper and Row. 498 pp.

This widely-reviewed and highly-praised book is the first major biography of Marx in English in a number of decades. The author is a Marx-scholar, specializing in the earlier thought (pre-1848) of the great socialist. The urgent need for such a project as this one is not at all obvious; no new information of any great significance concerning Marx's life has come to light since the appearance of earlier biographies, and while certain works (such as *The Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844* and *The Grundrisse)* have only recently been published or had their importance sufficiently appreciated, McLellan's treatment of these is for the most part so superficial as to hardly warrant being embedded in a full-scale biography. The tone is one of "critical" sympathy: certainly not the kind of thing that might come from East Berlin, but, on the other hand, there is scarcely a major criticism of Marxism that is mentioned in the course of expositing and analyzing Marx's thought, let alone admitted as plausible. McLellan's frame of mind may be illustrated by the following: in 1849, Marx was the editor of the radical journal, *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, which, naturally, often published analyses of the revolutionary situation in Europe at the time. One such, by Marx's friend Engels, contains this statement:

> With the first successful revolt of the French proletariat . . . the Austrian Germans and Magyars will be free and exact a bloody revenge from the Slavic barbarians. The general war that will break out will break this Slavic union and annihilate all these small pigheaded nations right down to their very names. The next world war will cause to vanish from the face of the earth not only reactionary classes and dynasties but also whole reactionary peoples. And that, too, is progress.

McLellan's comment: "This view was typical of other correspondants of the paper [which] was misled by the role that certain sections of the Slavs played in 1848-49 into describing whole nations as being once and for all revolutionary or counter-revolutionary, as having a right to a history or not having a right to any history at all." But whether Marx and Engels were correct in their ethno-political interpretation is hardly the point here. Let the reader consider once more what Engels wrote (and Marx published and doubtless agreed with): how else can it be characterized than as a call for—and a gloating in the prospect of—genocide? In what other 19th century author of similar stature could such a passage be found? How could McLellan's comment be considered as anything like commensurate to the meaning of this passage and therefore to what Engels and Marx were feeling at this time? But this is surely the kind of thing with which a biographer *should* concern himself! For anyone who wishes to begin to penetrate to the thought of Marx, Isaiah Berlin's *Karl Marx* is unexcelled as a short treatment and more than adequate on Marx's life for the purposes of the educated layman (besides, while McLellan is pedestrian in style, Berlin is consistently very fine); and the best critique of Marxism (aside from its economics) is provided by the British philosopher and libertarian, H. B. Acton, in his *The Illusion of the Epoch.*

ALIENATION AND THE SOVIET ECONOMY. By Paul Craig Roberts. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press. 1971. 121 pp.

Considering the place of Marxism in today's intellectual world, there are far too few libertarian scholars devoting any substantial part of their efforts to understanding and rebutting it (as well as salvaging what parts can be useful for a correct social philosophy), which may account to some extent for the superficiality of a great deal of Marx-criticism. One exception is H. B. Acton, mentioned above, and another is Paul Craig Roberts, who is an economist now with the Hoover Institution (as well as a contributor to REASON). As against even better than average Marx commentators, such as the left-liberal Daniel Bell or the democratic socialist T. B. Bottomore, Roberts demonstrates originality in two important respects: first, in his determination to drive his argument home with no reverence at all for Marx's position as a culture-hero—there is a refreshing gloves-off approach—and, second, in the breath-taking sweep of the argument itself (in regard to both, as he graciously acknowledges, he is following in the footsteps of Michael Polanyi in the latter's interpretation of Marxism and Soviet economic history). The argument is basically this: the theme of overcoming Man's alienation is, indeed, the central theme and meaning of Marxism from first to last (some scholars have claimed to find it only in the thought of Marx as a young man). What that overcoming—equivalent to the final liberation of humankind—consists in is the abolition of commodity production, which is to say, of production for a market. It is from this process that all the other evils which Marx identified in the present human condition flow. Now, Roberts maintains, reality is such that it is demonstrably not possible in economies above the primitive level to do without commodity production (in other words, without a market-system in some sense, real or simulated). Thus, in the case of the Bolshevik Revolution, what we have is a really beautiful historical irony of vast scope (and vastly tragic consequences), as well as what could be viewed as a lesson in elementary metaphysics: low-grade intellectuals like Lenin seized power in order to do the impossible. Reality proved refractory to the actualization of their whims, and they failed—*although scarcely anyone to this day has acknowledged that failure.* The crucial episode here, Roberts demonstrates, was "War Communism" (1918-1921), which represented not a set of stop-gap measures, but rather the very goal of the Marxist Revolution: the suppression of the price-system, market-relationships and commodity production. It had to be abandoned because, as Trotsky himself later wrote: "the collapse of the productive forces surpassed anything of the kind that history had ever seen. The country, and the government with it, were at the very edge of the abyss." With its abandonment, and especially with the

increasing reliance of the "socialist" countries on market mechanisms, the whole point of Marxist-Leninist revolutions and take-overs disappears, and Marxism, properly understood, vanishes like a dream. It is easy to see that Roberts has written an extremely important and provocative book.

THE FELLOW-TRAVELLERS: A POST-SCRIPT TO THE ENLIGHTENMENT. By David Caute. New York: Macmillan. 433 pp.

There must be few terms in the political vocabulary that evoke as instantaneous and justifiable a feeling of contempt as "fellow-traveller." The term refers, of course, to those who admired the "noble" Soviet experiment (from afar); i.e., Western intellectuals who by their pen and spoken word excused and furnished rationalizations of the Russian people's road to Calvary, while meanwhile in Paris, London, New York and elsewhere in the West enjoying more than the average man's benefits from capitalism and the rule of law. *Der Geist steht links* ("intellect is on the left") is not altogether true; in point of fact, really creative writers in the 20th century have tended to be *conservative* or *reactionary* (Eliot, Pound, Yeats, Lawrence, Faulkner, among English-speaking writers, for instance) rather than leftist (a few, like the brilliant Nabokov, have been mild classical liberal-types, but none, alas, really libertarian). The leftists, though, have been much more conspicuous. David Caute's very intelligent book chronicles the ups and downs of the crush which a large number of French, German, English, American and other intellectuals had on those who wielded the whip over the Russian masses. The great majority of expressions of admiration for Soviet leaders, institutions and policies over the decades—even on the part of distinguished and eminent writers and thinkers such as Romain Rolland, Julian Huxley, Dreiser, Gide and so on—are predictably childish (Huxley said that "the dictatorship of the proletariat" meant "roughly that paramountcy must be given to working class interests"). An exception would have to be made for the Fabians, Sidney and Beatrice Webb and Bernard Shaw. An insight of Caute's is that *those* people at least knew rather well what they were about: proponents of planning by an elite of experts, and believers in a salutary discipline exercised over ignorant and resisting masses, they found the Stalinist dictatorship to be just their cup of tea. Caute is weak, however, on the theoretical framework he provides for his book (indicated by the sub-title): conservatives, unfortunately, may be able to exploit his linking of the phenomenon of fellow-travelling with the Enlightenment when, in fact, there is little justification for such an association. The genealogy Caute is seeking leads back, through Saint-Simon especially, to a certain positivist and totalitarian *wing* of 18th century thought, but it would be very hard to include in this writers like Voltaire, Hume and Kant. Nonetheless, this is all in all a worthwhile book, its value enhanced by the fact that its author is himself an informed and humane socialist. ◻

# foreign correspondent

## GUATEMALA: RIGHT-WING SOCIALISM

**Guatemala City.** A few months ago we had presidential elections in Guatemala. The incumbent party won and has remained in power despite wide-spread accusations of electoral fraud. However, the immediate concern of the population is moral and financial survival under the present regime, disregarding the legitimacy of the elections.

Would it surprise anyone to know that in the first few months of office the Government has instituted higher taxes, maximum price controls, higher minimum salary laws and other forms of intervention? The symptom is common world-wide and the time chosen for the application of the measures — the beginning of the term — is politically appropriate, since the Government feels strong. Towards the latter months of its term, we shall be coaxed into giving our votes to the incumbents with lures of lower taxes, pompous promises, and all the other typical Government tactics.

The surprising thing about these measures is that it was the right-wing party that applied them! What the left-wing party would have been like is an open question. It is not clear that it would have been worse. However, the left-wing means to the left-wing end would have been different from the right-wing means to the left-wing end. As an example, I can cite the case of a cement factory in Guatemala which is privately owned. The Government has raised the company's taxes. The State owned electric power company has increased their electricity bill several-fold and Government price controls have not allowed the company to raise its prices in line with inflation. Presently it is losing money and will soon be bankrupt.

I foresee in the near future a "deal" being made between the company and the Government, a sort of joint ownership with the State purchasing the factory's by-then depreciated stock. So desperate will the company be that it will probably welcome the merger, especially under the threat of Government intervention in the event of refusal. If anyone has the power to make "an offer that can't be refused," it is the Government. Of course, once the State is part owner, it will lift the ceiling on cement prices and all will *appear* well. And it *will* be well, but *only* for the Government. The State will have continued to feed its lust for power with the extension of "public" property and deadhanded bureaucracy. Since the bureaucrats' wealth is not at stake, they will have less incentive to provide the low-cost services offered by the previous owners.

It is easy to blame the party in power for our state of affairs. But aside from serving as an emotional escape — a psychological projection — it covers part of the truth. In a democracy such as ours, the majority chooses the party, but the party does not determine our tastes, much as in a market economy, producers do not determine the consumers' preferences (John Kenneth Galbraith's assertions to the contrary notwithstanding). So in a way we have consumer sovereignty: we choose the party to rule; and in a way we also suffer from consumer servitude as even those who do not choose must accept the consequences of majority choice.

Granted that "consumer sovereignty" is an exaggerated label to pin on the brand of statism that we get, especially since the political arena is not exactly an open market. But my point is that there is presently a demand for socialism in Guatemala (and indeed in the rest of the world). Since our system is a democracy, the parties try to cater to the demand of the majority as that is the group that will get them in office. The platforms of those parties that truly want to be elected will tend to differ only inasmuch as they miscalculate the demands of the majority and, since the current of public thought is better known every day (we have better information), the platforms will tend to be more similar over time. This process of homogenization is what the late Professor Norbert Wiener called "entropy." Readers might consider if this is not also the case in their own

countries. It seems to be so in the U.S.

If we are to get basically the same medicine from different political parties, perhaps we should prefer the avowedly leftist parties. The socialists at least label their actions with a familiar terminology. Going back to the example of the cement factory, I am sure that the right-wing party in power will take it over as a move of "joint cooperation." The socialists would do the same thing but without the Newspeak; *they* would call it by its true name: expropriation.

With the use of euphemisms, the right-wing party will blame the failures of the economy on private enterprise and it will be alleged that the entrepreneurs resisted the helpful aid of the Government. Clear and comprehensible terminology has the advantage that, when the socialistic measures fail, the public will know that it was *because* of Government intervention, not in spite of it. Socialism will be responsible in both cases, but in the latter it will be known.

As the situation stands now in Guatemala, we must suffer a constant deluge of statism, embalmed by a demagoguery that enshrouds who or what is responsible. We may have the government we deserve — but we do not know exactly *what* we are deserving. ◻

FERNANDO LINARES

# frontlines

## ELECTION SUMMARY

By Eric Garris

*Many libertarians ran for elective offices around the country in the November 5, 1974 general elections. They ran for offices ranging from Governor to Parks and Recreation Board on several political parties and as independents. Generally, libertarian candidates did not do as well as expected by some, but their campaigns generated a good deal of publicity for libertarian ideas. Once people realize that libertarianism is here to stay on the American political scene (1976?) they will be more willing to vote for libertarian candidates. In this election, many people were unwilling to vote for minor candidates for fear of wasting their votes, even if they agreed with the candidates.*

*This analysis of the elections includes all available results and estimates as of press time, November 16th. Some vote totals are incomplete, and may increase, but percentages should stay about the same. Not all candidates listed are libertarians. Included are Libertarian Party candidates, candidates running on other parties or as independents with libertarian support, plus other races of interest to libertarians. If the reader finds that the information is incomplete or that it omits a race of interest, it is because nothing was ever sent to us concerning that candidate or race. A follow-up report will be in the next issue with more complete results, so please send us any other election information which might be of interest to our readers. Most totals are from semi-official returns and are rounded off to the nearest hundred.*

### ALASKA

- **Paul Beaird,** Libertarian Party (LP) write-in candidate for Congress, received 200-300 votes (not all results are in).
- **Doug Garrett** was on the ballot as both Republican and LP for State Legislator from Anchorage. He received about 1,150 votes for 20% of the vote.
- **Joseph Volger** received about 5,000 votes, or 6%, for Governor on the Alaska Independence ticket. Volger is not a libertarian, but is part of the Alaska Secession Movement which includes libertarian support.

### CALIFORNIA

- **Elizabeth Keathley,** a libertarian running on the Peace and Freedom Party (PFP) ticket for Governor, received 75,000 votes for 1.2% of the vote. Keathley ran a full-time, consistently libertarian campaign, and got daily media coverage around the state in the last two months of the campaign. Her campaign was very successful in introducing libertarianism to liberals and leftists, and has helped to change the image of PFP in California. She also got support from conservatives — who were not satisfied with the American Independent candidate — including Frank Cortese, a John Birch Society coordinator; Mike Culbert, editor of the conservative *Berkeley Daily Gazette* (he published two very favorable editorials); and Anthony Hilder of the American Party and a *National Educator* reporter. Although her vote total was lower than expected, the Keathley campaign was a great success in terms of the tremendous amount of media coverage that was received. (Note: The campaign is over $1,000 in debt. Contributions may be sent to Elizabeth Keathley, P.O. Box 1202, Free Venice, CA 90291.) For more information about the new libertarian PFP, see "Frontlines," November 1974.

PHOTO: LAWRENCE SAMUELS

*Elizabeth Keathley, California*

- **Corey Cassanova,** running for State Controller on the PFP ticket with the endorsement of the LP State Executive Committee, received 151,000 votes, or 2.6%; his total was enough to keep the PFP on the ballot for another four years. He ran on a platform of, among other things, refusing to sign all state checks, except for tax refunds, and urged people to engage in tax resistance. He appeared on a televised statewide debate with his Republican and American Independent opponents.

*Corey Cassanova, California*

- **Mike Timko,** national LP charter member running on the PFP ticket for State Board of Equalization (Tax Board) in Los Angeles received 51,000 votes, for 4.2% of the vote.
- **Eric Garris,** LP member, running on the PFP ticket for State Senator from West Los Angeles received 4,300 votes for 2.3%.
- **Jerry Rubin** (*not* of the Chicago 8) running on the PFP ticket with libertarian support for Congress in West Los Angeles, received 5,600 votes, or 3.6%.
- **Bill Stanley,** LP member, running for Conejo Valley Recreation and Parks Board in Ventura County (nonpartisan) received 3,800 votes, or about 7%. He placed seventh out of eight candidates. Stanley is very active in his area and

wrote the opposition argument to a school bond (in the name of LP) which passed by less than 1% in the same election.

- At last a victory! In Los Angeles, a proposition for a one-cent sales tax increase for a rapid transit system was defeated, 54% to 46%. The opposition ballot argument was written by **Charles Barr** (a REASON contributor) in the name of the **Libertarian Alternative of Los Angeles** (see "Frontlines," Dec. 1974 for the text of the argument). Mayor Tom Bradley wrote the argument supporting the tax increase. Barr campaigned heavily against the measure, being the chief spokesperson for the opposition, and was successful despite a massive advertising and media campaign by the Pro forces. He made 13 television appearances, 11 of them on local network outlets, and helped obtain publicity for other groups opposing the tax increase.
- Votes for **John Hospers** and other statewide LP write-in candidates will not be released until late November, and will appear in the next issue. With a few counties reporting, this writer estimates that Hospers will receive about 2,400 votes for Governor, and other LP candidates will receive 1,500 to 2,000 votes each. Hospers got 980 write-in votes for President in 1972 in California. Hospers made media and speaking appearances, and got the endorsements of writer Gary Allen (of the Birch Society) and science fiction writers Robert Heinlein and Poul Anderson. **David Bergland,** running for Attorney-General, also made many media and speaking appearances, and appeared on statewide television in a debate with the Democratic and Socialist candidates (frankly, we think he creamed them!). **Bill White,** candidate for U.S. Senator, was by far the most active LP candidate, campaigning full time for the last two months of the campaign, and spending a few thousand dollars. He also appeared on a statewide televised debate, with two socialist write-in candidates. **Bill Susel,** running for Lt. Governor, and **Lloyd Taylor,** running for State Treasurer, each made a few speaking and media appearances, and distributed campaign brochures in their spare time. Taylor was also the officially-endorsed write-in candidate of the PFP. **Veronica Meidus,** candidate for Secretary of State, had to stop campaigning two months before the election due to financial hardships.

### GEORGIA

- The Georgia LP ran one candidate for State Legislator from Glynn County on the Republican ticket. **Kenneth Trobaugh** was very active, campaigning full time for six months. He was reported to have done "very well," but we have no final vote totals yet.

### IDAHO

- **Steve Symms,** a Republican Congressman, easily won re-election. This writer does not consider Symms to be a libertarian, but notes that he has gotten support from libertarians.
- **Bob Smith,** a former Symms aide, received 43% of the vote as a Republican for U. S. Senator against Frank Church. Smith is billed as a conservative-libertarian, but is considered to be much more libertarian than Symms.

### LOUISIANA

- **Jeremy Millett,** LP member running for Congress as an independent, received 7,200 votes, or about 11%. There was no Republican running in the district, as the voter registration in the district is 97% Democratic!
- **Hensen Moore,** a Republican running for Congress with libertarian support in John Rarick's old district *may* have won the election. The vote totals were extremely close, and the election has not been officially decided.

### MICHIGAN

- LP member **Joe Werner** ran as a Republican candidate for State Legislator from Sterling Heights and Troy and received 10,400 votes, or 39% of the vote. He ran a very active campaign and did much better than other Republicans in the area. He blames his defeat on the Republican label, but had no other choice because of stiff ballot requirements for minor parties.
- **William Krebaum,** LP State Chairperson, ran as a Republican in East Detroit for State Legislator and received 4,700 votes, or 23.7%

### MINNESOTA

- **Richard Kleinow** running for Governor and **Claudia Jensen** running for Lt. Governor on the LP ticket received about 2,000 votes for 0.2% with eight candidates on the ballot. Although this total was rather low, the campaign was successful in that it brought in about 50 new LP members in Minnesota.

### NEVADA

- **Jim Houston,** the Independent American Party (IAP) candidate for Governor, ran a very libertarian campaign and got a good deal of libertarian support. He received 26,000 votes (2,000 behind the Republican) for about 15.7% of the vote. Houston had advocated setting up a "Duo-Monetary System" backed by Gold and Silver as an alternative to Federal Reserve Notes for Nevada. He had also called for the Federal Government to give back the land it owns in Nevada (89% of the state). Houston is part owner of a large gold and silver exchange.

  Opponents accused him of conflict of interest over the Duo-Monetary System — so, a week before the election he sent equal shares in his company (totalling half the stock) to all voters in Nevada, with the shares negotiable only if he was elected and the system was enacted. Less than a week before the election, he was running neck-and-neck with the Democratic incumbent in the polls. A few days before the election, the *Las Vegas Sun* and other newspapers ran a last-minute smear campaign against Houston, claiming that his company was bankrupt and that the IRS and the SEC were investigating him — this lost him a good deal of support. Two days after the election, he was cleared of all charges. Houston plans to put the Duo-Monetary System on the ballot through the initiative process.
- **James "Libertarian" Burns,** Nevada LP State Chairperson, ran in the Republican primary for Congress and received 2,500 votes, or about 6%. Since it is difficult to get a new party on the ballot, Burns changed his name legally, and the word "Libertarian" appeared on the ballot as his middle name.

### NEW HAMPSHIRE

- **Art Ketchen,** LP State Vice-Chairperson, running for State Legislator in Brookline and Hollis as a Democrat received 809 votes out of 1,723 people voting, or 46.9%. This was a three-way race for two seats (top two win). Ketchen carried the town of Brookline, with 55.3%. (Note: each voter voted for two candidates, so percentages indicate people who voted for Ketchen out of people voting, not out of total votes. The same applies for other State Legislative races below.)
- **Carl Gage,** a Republican running with LP endorsement in a nine-way race for five seats in the State Legislature from Exeter received 1,376 votes out of 3,090 voters for 44.5%. He placed sixth, losing a seat in the legislature by 32 votes.
- **Bill Horan,** LP member running as an independent in a ten-way race for four seats in the State Legislature from Manchester received 62 votes out of 2,076 voters for 2.9%.
- **Jack O'Brien,** LP-endorsed candidate running as an independent for Rockingham County Commissioner received 1,100 votes for 8.8%. This was a two-way race and the incumbent had both the Democratic and Republican endorsement.

### NEW JERSEY

- **Robert Steiner,** an LP member running as an independent for Congress, received about 1,000 votes, or 0.8% of the vote. He placed fifth out of five candidates.
- There was a candidate on the ballot for Congress (in a different district than Steiner) whose party ballot listing was "Politicians Are Crooks."

## NEW YORK

- The Free Libertarian Party (FLP) was unable to get that magic number of 50,000 votes for ballot status. Total votes are not in, but estimates for **Jerry Tuccille** for Governor range from 9,000 to 15,000. Other statewide LP candidates may get as much as 30,000 votes. The poor showing was blamed on several factors. One was that there are 4 major and 6 minor parties on the ballot, and minor parties are taken much less seriously than in other states. Another is that outside of New York City the FLP was forced to share the bottom line with the Courage (American) Party, while the socialist parties got their own lines above the FLP. Despite the poor showing, the FLP candidates got a good deal of media coverage, especially in national publications. Total votes for all FLP candidates will be listed in the next issue.
- **Sandy Cohen,** FLP candidate for Congress from Poughkeepsie, also did more poorly than expected. Although final totals are not in, he received about 2% of the vote. Even the local media had predicted that he would get 10-15%, yet it seems that people were not willing to vote for such a new party. Cohen ran

*Sanford Cohen, New York*

a 22-month campaign, spent about $20,000, and got media coverage virtually daily in his race to unseat Republican Hamilton Fish, Jr. During the campaign, Fish was forced to change his stands on several issues, such as gold legalization, so as not to lose votes to Cohen. But Fish made a breakthrough when he got national publicity for his anti-Nixon stand in the House Judiciary Committee Impeachment hearings. The Cohen campaign certainly was successful, as no doubt everyone in Poughkeepsie has heard of libertarianism. Cohen has been asked to continue a weekly column that he has had during the campaign in a local chain of newspapers.
**Guy Riggs,** running for State Assembly with Cohen, received about 1% of the vote. (Note: The Cohen campaign is $4,000 in debt; contributions can be sent to Citizens for Cohen, Box 1776, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601.)

- **Joseph Gentilli,** FLP-endorsed candidate for Congress in Brooklyn on the Republican and Conservative lines received about 19,700 votes for 21.3% of the vote.
- **Stewart Feigel,** FLP-endorsed candidate for State Senator from Brooklyn on the Republican and Conservative lines, received 15,100 votes for 18.2%.
- There were three candidates for State Assembly on both the FLP and Conservative lines. **Virginia Walker,** from Suffolk County, had won a contested primary for the Conservative Party nomination. She received about 3,300 votes for 6.3%, and ran as high as 17% in some areas. **Mary Jo Wanzer,** from Nassau County, received about 5% of the vote, beating the Liberal Party candidate. **Alan Le Page,** from Harlem, received about 3.6% of the vote. Generally, these candidates got a much smaller percentage of their votes on the FLP line than on the Conservative line. Le Page got the highest amount of votes on the FLP line, about 30%.
- **Larry Penner,** FLP endorsed candidate for New York City Council running as a Republican received 7,900 votes, or 22.4%. He beat both the Liberal and Conservative candidates.

## OHIO

- **Kay Harroff,** founding Chairperson of the Ohio LP, running for U. S. Senator, received 79,400 votes for about 2.7%. She ran an extremely active campaign as LP, although state election laws required her to be listed on the ballot as an independent. She beat another independent identified with the American Party by 16,000 votes. Although the polls showed her with over 7% of the

*Kay Harroff, Ohio*

vote before the election, many voters who had supported her felt that voting for an independent would be a wasted vote. Harroff campaigned full time and ended up spending about seven and one-half cents a vote. (Note: The campaign is in debt. Please send contributions to Harroff for Senate Committee, 204 Solon Road, Cleveland, OH 44146.)

## OKLAHOMA

- **Mickey Edwards,** a Republican running with libertarian support, barely lost in his bid for a Congressional seat in Oklahoma City. He received about 48,700 votes for 48.3%.
- **Mary Helm,** a conservative-libertarian running for State Senator as a Republican from Oklahoma City got elected with 12,000 votes, or 55% of the vote.

## OREGON

- The Oregon LP had only one candidate, **Paul Pferdner,** who withdrew before the election in his bid for State Legislator from Portland. The Oregon LP will be holding its State Convention on January 25th, at the Congress Hotel in Portland. **Sandy Cohen** will be a featured speaker. For information contact: OLP, P.O. Box 42381, Portland, OR 97242; phone: (503) 777-4044.

## TEXAS

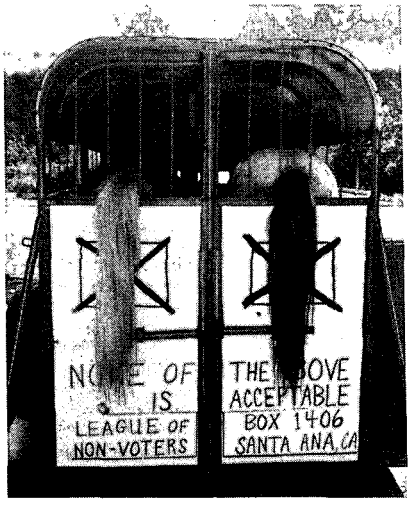
- **Ron Paul,** LP-endorsed candidate for Congress in Houston running as a Republican, received 18,800 votes for 29.4%.

## UTAH

- **Karl Bray,** running for Congress on the LP ticket received about 1,400 votes for about 1%. Although he had campaigned heavily and was getting about 8% in the polls, Bray was indicted by the IRS two weeks before the election for failure to file a tax return, which greatly hurt his campaign chances. Karl has announced that he will run for U.S. Senator in 1976, and that at least 20 other LP candidates will be running in Utah.

## WASHINGTON

- **Skip Barron,** running for State Legislator on LP, received 17% of the vote in a two-way race.
- **Richard Dyment,** also running for State Legislator on LP, received 6% of the vote in a three-way race. These two totals are enough to put the LP on the ballot for the next election in Washington. ◻

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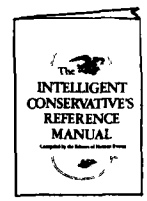


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## GOING AFTER THE REGULATORS

As noted previously in this column (see "Trends," Nov. 1974, p. 56), there is growing concern among economists and policy makers about the effects of Federal regulatory agencies in building rigidities into the price system, thereby preventing the market from operating freely. In particular, such rigidities tend to keep many prices at artificially high levels (especially galling in these days of double-digit inflation). Thus, it is heartening to see this theme increasingly appearing in public debate.

At the president's "economic summit," leading economists led by Thomas Moore of the Hoover Institution endorsed a list of 22 "rigidities" they agreed should be abolished. Included were restrictions on truck cargoes and routes, import controls, milk and produce price support mechanisms, the Jones Act (requiring coastal shipping to move in U.S. vessels), the government's first-class mail monopoly, airline price-fixing, natural gas price control, etc. Moore's original list contained 32 rigidities, and Hendrik Houthakker of Harvard presented an even longer list of 45 such items, including union-inspired rules designed to keep the unemployed out of certain occupations, and the notorious Davis-Bacon Act. That the economists were nearly unanimous in their action is an indication that perhaps deregulation is an idea whose time is finally at hand. (Indeed, George Eads of the George Washington University economics department noted that "any economist venturing to support regulation today is apt to find himself in a very lonely position.")

Still, the problem remains: how to go about changing things, given the extremely powerful lobbies possessed by the beneficiaries of regulation?

One idea is to utilize other government agencies to fight the regulators and their cozy relationships with industry. Thus, FTC chairman (and REASON subscriber) Lewis A. Engman recently proposed that role for his agency. The FTC has embarked on a major study of the costs of regulation to consumers (example: $16 billion a year in excess transportation costs), and plans to intervene on behalf of consumers in various agency rate-setting proceedings. Engman went out of his way to attack "government-sanctioned price-fixing" as a major contributor to high prices. "Our airlines, our trucks, our electronic media, and countless others are on the dole. We get irate about welfare fraud. But our complex system of hidden regulatory subsidies makes welfare fraud look like petty larceny . . . . Today's regulatory machinery does little more than shelter producers from the normal consequences of lassitude and inefficiency . . . . The fact of the matter is that most regulated industries have become Federal protectorates, living in the cozy world of cost-plus, safely protected from the ugly specters of competition, efficiency, and innovation."

Engman is not the only one carrying this message. In October Ralph Nader's Center for the Study of Responsive Law published a 950-page citizens guidebook to the "bureaucratic labyrinths" of the Federal regulatory system, and has called for a substantial amount of deregulation. The Joint Economic Committee of Congress says a new study commission should take a close look at "excessive or inept regulation" in the fields of transportation and communication. Finally, President Ford has called for the creation of a National Commission on Regulatory Reform, to identify and eliminate the hodgepodge of regulations that increase costs to consumers above free-market levels. Ford thus joins the groups listed above, as well as the Council of Economic Advisors, the Office of Telecommunications Policy, the Justice Department's Antitrust Division, and the Senate Antitrust and Monopoly Subcommittee in urging a massive overhaul of the Washington alphabet soup of regulatory agencies.

SOURCES:
- "Attacking Sacred Cows," *Time,* Oct. 7, 1974, p. 43.
- "A Summit Bonus," *National Review,* Oct. 11, 1974, p. 1154.
- "FTC Chairman in Unprecedented Attack on Government Agencies," UPI (Washington), Oct. 7, 1974.
- "Federal Commissions Draw Increasing Fire, Called Inept and Costly," *Wall Street Journal,* Oct. 9, 1974.
- "FTC Focuses on CAB Activities," *Aviation Week,* Oct. 14, 1974, p. 22.
- "Coziness of Industries and Their Regulators Is in for Scrutiny," J. F. terHorst, *Los Angeles Times,* Oct. 17, 1974.
- "How to Regulate the Regulators," *Time,* Oct. 21, 1974, p. 58.

## LEGAL "USURY"?

As noted earlier this year, laws controlling the price of money (otherwise known as usury laws) are wreaking havoc in many of the nation's money markets (see "Trends," Feb. 1974, p. 36). In Missouri, the eight percent ceiling has caused an end to mortgage loans within the state, forcing home-buyers to deal with out-of-state lenders and forcing Missouri lenders to loan only to out-of-state buyers. Among the many states with 10 percent interest ceilings, Tennessee has been especially hard-hit. However, one Tennessee banker thinks he has found a way around the price control law.

William Matthews, president of Union Planters National Bank of Memphis, has come up with the idea of an "indexed" loan. The loan agreement charges the 10 percent limit as the interest rate, but provides for the payment of an additional "fee" if the Consumer Price Index is greater when the loan matures than when it was granted. The fee would be the percentage difference in the CPI. During the term of the bank's first such loan, the CPI rose one percent, and the bank charged an additional one percent of the $50,000 amount. The borrower, Aztec Properties Inc., refused to pay the fee, and the bank has now taken Aztec to court in order to test the legality of the plan.

Bankers across the state are watching the case with interest, since it holds the potential for providing a way around the state's usury law. By tying the interest rate to a price index, which can rise or fall, the bank's plan resembles a gold clause contract (which were outlawed in the 1930's). If approved by the Tennessee courts, the plan could rekindle interest in such devices for countering the effects of inflation.

SOURCES:
- "When Usury Laws Backfire Against Borrowers," *Business Week,* Aug. 17, 1974, p. 93.
- "A Way to Get Around State Usury Laws?" *Business Week,* Aug. 24, 1974, p. 20.

## ADVERTISING EYEGLASSES

As with prescription drugs and various other health care services, the rationale of "professionalism" has long been used to justify laws preventing normal market mechanisms from operating, to the benefit of special interest "professional" groups. Thus, California (like many other states) has long banned advertising the prices of eyeglasses, despite studies showing that in states with such prohibitions glasses cost from 25 to 100 percent more than in states where advertising is allowed (see "Trends," May 1973, p. 36). The California ban has now been challenged, in several suits that could very well open yet another market to competition.

The case began when Opti-Cal, the state's largest optical chain, decided to test the law by exercising its moral right to advertise the prices of its products. Last August it placed ads in over 20 newspapers saying

it would fill any optical prescription, frames and lenses both, for only $19.90. The offer was legitimate, and the glasses were of normal quality. When the state responded with an injunction, Opti-Cal continued the newspaper ads, using them to contend that the injunction violated the First Amendment, and was subsequently held in contempt of court and fined $2000. It has also continued to post large signs at its retail outlets advertising the $19.90 price.

While Opti-Cal was battling the courts, a consumer organization—California Citizen Action Group—filed suit in federal court in Los Angeles challenging the constitutionality of the laws banning advertising, not only of eyeglasses, but also of prescription drugs and "other commodities and services in the healing arts." The group's attorney, Charles W. Anshen (who has also been retained by Opti-Cal) states that "these laws which prohibit advertising are designed not for the protection of the public, but for the protection of the profits of special interest professional groups." Adds Richard Spohn of the Citizen Action Group, prices are "dramatically lower" in states where advertising is legal, where "consumers can shop around, and the healthy restraint of competition acts in their favor." The group's lawsuit alleges that the anti-advertising laws deny citizens their rights to information (under the First Amendment) and to due process (under the Fourteenth Amendment). Anshen notes with favor the recent Virginia case in which a Federal court ruled that state's ban on prescription drug advertising to be unconstitutional, and expects a similar ruling in the California case.

SOURCES:
- "The Effects of Advertising on the Price of Eyeglasses," Lee Benham, *Journal of Law and Economics,* Vol. 15 (2), Oct. 1972, p. 337.
- "Suit Challenges Ban on Prices in Eyeglass Advertising," Dorothy Townsend, *Los Angeles Times,* Oct. 13, 1974.
- "Company Fined for Ads Giving Eyeglass Prices," Myrna Oliver, *Los Angeles Times* Oct. 25, 1974.

## THE RETURN OF GOLD

Despite continued Establishment propaganda to the contrary, gold seems once again headed for a major role in the world's monetary affairs. According to investment analyst Dr. Harry Schultz, the Arab governments are moving closer to implementing a gold-backed currency of their own. In Nevada, a libertarian running on the Independent American Party ticket, Jim Houston, ran a close race for governor, on a platform calling for the establishment of a "Dual Monetary System," under which the Nevada government would issue gold and silver-based currency in competition with Federal Reserve notes. And Senator Barry Goldwater recently called for a return to a full-fledged *gold standard* (not merely a gold-exchange standard or dollar convertibility).

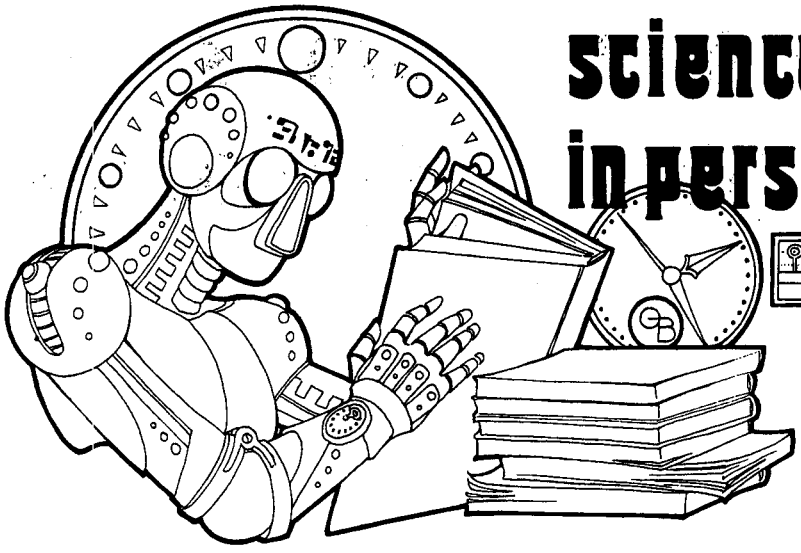
Perhaps most significant of all, the Federal Government recently held a private, non-publicized conference with industry leaders to discuss the role of gold after U.S. legalization. Some 70 government and business leaders heard former Treasury undersecretary Paul Volcker, Treasury director of gold and silver operations Thomas Wolfe, South African Finance Ministry secretary Gerald Brown, and broker/Harry Schultz associate James Sinclair debate and discuss the role of gold for six hours. Sinclair emerged from the private meeting "more positive about gold than ever," according to Schultz.

SOURCES:
- *International Harry Schultz Letter,* #326, middle October, 1974.
- Various newspapers, Reno and Las Vegas, Nevada, October/November 1974.

## MILESTONES

- *Press Freedom.* The FCC's odious Fairness Doctrine should be abolished, according to Sen. William Proxmire. In an October speech, the Wisconsin Senator noted that newspapers manage to be fair without government control, and "I contend that radio and TV would be fair without government control . . . . No newspaper has to answer to a government agency because of complaints from readers," he noted. "There is no reason why the First Amendment should not fully apply to broadcasters as it does to publishers." Proxmire also pointed out the inevitably political nature of government control of the media. "A reasonable assumption is that such power, although infrequently used, must affect the way broadcast newsmen do their jobs . . . . If our print media were controlled by the government . . . we would have propaganda. We would have a press spreading the word that government would want us to have," he added. (Source: "Proxmire Proposal to End Fairness Doctrine," AP, Washington, Oct. 2, 1974.)
- *Drug Laws.* Yet another knowledgeable public official has decided that the government's attempt at prohibiting marijuana by means of the criminal law is off base. In a speech to a closed meeting of the International Narcotic Enforcement Officers Association, the outgoing head of the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, Donald Santarelli, urged that police not enforce the laws against simple possession of marijuana. Although unwilling to advocate outright repeal in the present context, Santarelli cited the high cost of enforcement, the unfairness inherent in the uneven and sporadic enforcement of such laws, the severity of making juveniles into felons for committing a simple victimless act, and the hostility towards law enforcement in general that is engendered by enforcement of such unpopular laws. Santarelli still serves as a consultant to LEAA, and his views may carry considerable weight at the policy-making level. (Source: "Moratorium Urged on Marijuana Prosecution," Ronald J. Ostrow, *Los Angeles Times,* Oct. 7, 1974)
- *Politics.* A new political group has emerged in recent months, advocating that *all* incumbent politicians be voted out of office. The group, called the New American Revolution, wants to transform election day into "Rejection Day" by getting voters to vote against all incumbents who have served two or more terms, and to vote only for candidates who promise to limit themselves by law to two terms. The group's founder, Tony Hodges, charges that incumbent politicians have become a "royal class" insulated from their constituents and beholden only to special interests. Hodges advocates that the people "remove the government" by means of the ballot box. (Source: " 'New Revolution' Groups Wants to Oust Incumbents," Daryl Lembke, *Los Angeles Times,* Oct. 23, 1974)
- *Professions.* Three California women have filed a taxpayers' suit seeking to stop enforcement of the state's laws against prostitution. The three, who are ACLU members, charge that enforcing these laws wastes taxpayers' money and deprives prostitutes of free speech, privacy, and their right to due process of law. The suit names as defendants the Alameda County district attorney, the county's director of health care services, and the cities of Oakland, Berkeley, and Emeryville. (Source: "Three Women Challenge Antiprostitution Code," *Los Angeles Times,* Oct. 4, 1974)
- *Transportation.* Despite the destruction wrought by nearly a century of Federal regulation, there are still businessmen willing to seek profits by operating railroads. Even the bankrupt New Haven Railroad is being sought by one such entrepreneur, Frederic C. Dumaine, president of Amoskeag Co., owner of the profitable Bangor and Aroostook and part-owner of the Maine Central (35 percent) and the bankrupt Boston and Maine (22 percent). Under Dumaine's plan, these three lines would be combined with the New Haven and the Delaware and Hudson to form a profitable, stockholder-owned New England railroad system. All of this would be accomplished without government aid, and would relieve the Penn Central trustees of the headache of the bankrupt, decaying New Haven system. (Source: "Dumaine's Rail Plan," *Business Week,* Aug. 24, 1974, p. 26)

**This column reports trends in the advancement of individual liberty and the rediscovery of economic freedom. Readers are invited to submit material of potential interest.**



# science fiction in perspective

JOHN J PIERCE

*John Pierce's Science Fiction column alternates monthly in* REASON *with Davis Keeler's Money column.*

## SF ON THE SCREEN

Whatever happened to *Who?* The movie, that is?

There really was such a film. Judy-Lynn del Rey, among others, saw preview screenings (she thought it stank!). Maybe the producers decided it was so bad they wouldn't release it.

If so, it would have to be really *abominable*—judging from the average quality of "science fiction" movies, and television shows, that *do* get released. Which brings us to a painful, but important subject: why are science fiction movies and shows so bad?

One might simply refer to Sturgeon's Law: 90 per cent of everything is crud, and point out that most movies and television shows in *any* genre aren't very good either. But for SF, the percentage of bad adaptations for the visual media is more like 99 per cent.

In what other field can you count the good examples on your fingers, without even having to worry about toes? And while tastes may differ, it would be hard to find anyone other than a dedicated monster movie fan who could come up with more than a dozen classics.

We have some typical examples on television this year. Probably the most publicized is *Planet of the Apes,* which started out as a Swiftian satire by Pierre Boule, spawned a series of movies—each more ridiculous than the one before it—and has finally degenerated into pure monkey business on the tube.

We've had *The Six Million Dollar Man,* which is an entertaining adventure series at least—but scarcely more than that. And if you want to count it as SF (few knowledgeable fans would), there's *The Night Stalker,* which appears to have a short life ahead of it—how many weeks in a row can you use the same plot about vampires or werewolves in the midst of a modern city without even the most superstitious viewers giving up on the series?

In the movie field, we seem to have at least exhausted the run of giant ants, grasshoppers, lizards and the like that used to threaten mankind. The plot of the last such attempt, *Night of the Lepus,* was worthy of the March Hare—but apparently it didn't bring in enough lettuce to encourage a sequel. Maybe they're still exploiting the theme in Japan; if so, let's hope their next export is called *Destroy All Monster Movies!*

But to get back to our original question: why are SF movies and TV shows so bad? The main reasons are (a) lack of money and (b) lack of imagination.

Robert A. Heinlein once said no producer in his right mind would risk spending the amount of money it would take to make a real science fiction movie. He should know—he worked as technical advisor to *Destination Moon* in 1950.

Well, *some* producers have tried, even if they weren't in their right minds. But unlike science fiction writers, they can't count on the usual SF audience to make their investment worthwhile, which accounts, among other things, for the strange contradictions and strange reception of *2001* a few years ago.

## SPACED OUT

It was called a "space odyssey," but if that was what *2001* had been it might have failed at the box office. Stanley Kubrick, who didn't believe in the rationalistic philosophy of SF in any event, turned it into an excursion into psychedelic mysticism that turned on the youth crowd and made the movie a runaway hit.

Hard-core SF critics weren't so sure it was a classic. While praising the technical perfection of the movie, for example, Lester del Rey was contemptuous of those who found the finale a "mind-blowing" experience. "It takes very little to blow some minds," he observed.

Arthur C. Clarke, whose novelization of *2001* is much clearer than the movie—and also less praised by mass-media critics—avoids trying to explain the meaning behind his collaborative screenplay with Kubrick. "All interpretations are correct," he says. But he has privately agreed it would be a nice idea if somebody filmed a "straight" version of *Earthlight.*

Clarke's involvement shows that putting a professional SF writer close to the production won't *necessarily* guarantee a good SF movie, though it has helped on occasion.

H. G. Wells, for example, wrote his own screenplay for *Things to Come*—and followed it up with a series of memos on

subjects like costumes, sets, music and integration of theme and image. His constant interference with producers, directors and cast drove them all crazy—but *Things to Come* turned out to be an SF classic, and it otherwise might not have been.

Heinlein, besides being advisor and co-screenwriter for *Destination Moon,* had one other advantage: the director's son-in-law was a rocket engineer in San Diego, and if anyone objected to Heinlein's insistence on technical accuracy, nepotism was on his side. Twenty years earlier, Fritz Lang had enlisted the services of no less than rocketry pioneer Hermann Oberth to tell him how to make *Woman in the Moon.*

But no amount of expert advice or money can make up for lack of imagination, as Harlan Ellison discovered when he tried to midwife a series called *The Starlost,* inspired by Heinlein's "Universe" and various imitations thereof.

Ellison is usually the mortal enemy of "hard" science fiction, but he had enough integrity to want to do *The Starlost* justice. Nobody else did, however.

He had carefully worked up an outline based on the series heroes trying to locate the lost controls of the runaway starship they were on—and not finding them until the last episode.

But before he knew it, the producers destroyed the integrity of the series by having the controls discovered in the second or third episode. Don't worry, they told Ellison—they could keep up suspense with a search for the *backup* controls. On questioning them, he learned they thought *backup* controls were what would make the starship back up!

*(The Starlost,* by the way, used leftover models from *Silent Running*—a much praised movie. Good as the models and sets were, it had suffered from such witlessness as an "ecologist" hero who never figured out until the very end that plants need *sunlight!)*

"Name" stars don't always help an SF movie, either—Joseph Cotten was once trapped into an unbelievably awful screen version of *From the Earth to the Moon.*

Occasionally, a film will turn out well seemingly by accident. *Forbidden Planet* was excellently done, though the theme was basically more Shakespearean than science fictional, and John Wyndham's *The Midwich Cuckoos* was brilliantly adapted as *Village of the Damned.* Neither SF writers nor technical experts were involved in either case—it was just a matter of thorough professionalism by those involved. Producers, directors, writers and cast simply used their own *intelligence.*

In contrast to such intelligent films, the term "mindless" seems almost too mild for exploitations of current fads like *Wild in the Streets,* appeals to xenophobic fear like *The Thing, The Invaders* and *UFO,* or Irwin Allen series like *Lost in Space* and *The Time Tunnel.*

**STAR TREK**

Gene Roddenberry's dedication, and the assistance of "name" SF writers made the early *Star Trek* a reasonably intelligent —if not profound—series. After the first season, the program tended to degenerate: too many excursions onto "allegorical" worlds inexplicably populated by ancient Romans, Nazis, 1920's gangsters and the like.

But what could Roddenberry do? A lot of science fiction ideas would either go over the heads of most viewers, or be impossible to realize technically. Try to create an alien being, for example, that isn't obviously just a man in a monster suit or a rubber model!

Even putting aside the question of the trouble and expense of technical work involved in translating SF ideas to the visual media, how is any producer to convey, for example, what is happening in a story that begins: "Martel was angry. He did not even adjust his blood away from anger . . . ." (from Cordwainer Smith's "Scanners Live in Vain")?

A movie has been made even from *Finnegan's Wake*—the very obscurities of the mainstream avant-garde are familiar to film makers, if not film audiences. But the novel experiences that are accepted in SF are so beyond the range of those in typical mainstream fiction that it is difficult, if not impossible, to render them on the screen without being clumsy and pretentious—as in the case of *Zardoz.*

Small wonder, then, that it is more popular to film warning stories with near-future settings—*On the Beach, Fail Safe, They,* and the like. Unfortunately, these don't always turn out very well, either.

Perhaps the increased popularity of written SF will make a difference. When Woody Allen submitted his script for *Sleeper* to Isaac Asimov for advice, Asimov didn't have to give any. Ideas like cryogenics and anti-utopian states are familiar enough by now to at least be handled satirically on the screen, and *Sleeper* was the best SF movie of 1973—unlikely as the source would have seemed a few years ago for such a venture.

But even in the best of circumstances, it's going to take money, imagination and integrity to produce more quality SF movies and television programs in the future. Science fiction is a field in which you just can't cut corners and still end up with anything worth seeing. ◻

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Sometimes there are
Occasional haunting moments,
Moments when pretense fails,
When being alone
  is nothing more than
  being alone;

Moments like now,
When the sun's last ray
  is being covered by night's coming,

Moments between songs,
When all is quiet —
  save the crickets;

Moments when there is no tomorrow,
  or now,
Only yesterday;
These are the moments
I wish you could love me.

**Dennis Bohn**


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• The granddaddy of all disaster movies has arrived at last. **EARTHQUAKE**, a (hopefully) fictional epic detailing the destruction of Los Angeles, is a masterpiece of special effects wizardry. From the toppling of hillside homes to the dizzy swaying and crumbling of giant downtown skyscrapers, not one sequence seems phony or contrived. The "Sensurround" system, described in this column a few months ago, works even better in a large theater than in a demonstration screening room. Using low-frequency sonic waves, it creates the "feel" of an earthquake with uncanny accuracy. The screenplay by George Fox and Mario Puzo has a slight tendency toward a soap-opera relationship among members of the all-star cast, but the cliches are kept to a minimum; and the plot construction is superbly engineered for maximum thrills and suspense. Charlton Heston creates his best role in years as an architectural engineer, uneasily contributing to the development of high-rise skyscrapers in downtown Los Angeles. Ava Gardner plays his neurotic wife, clinging desperately to the last shreds of their relationship. Genevieve Bujold turns in a winning performance as an actress whose young son is trapped by the quake. George Kennedy is an uncompromising, honest cop. Lorne Greene, Richard Roundtree, Marjoe Gortner, Victoria Principal and Lloyd Nolan all have juicy roles, and Walter Matthau has a running cameo as a quake-proof drunk. *Earthquake* cost a reported $8 million to make; but for thrills and excitement, it was worth every penny. If you see only one movie this year, *Earthquake* is the one to see. Rated "PG."

**— Charles F. Barr**

• Anyone who digs satire, rock music or off-beat spectacle is in for a treat. In its own way, **PHANTOM OF THE PARADISE** does for rock music what *Citizen Kane* did for newspapers. The pop music industry is pilloried (perhaps excessively) as a compendium of cynical promoters, freaky performers, drug pushers, and a mindless, frenzied audience. Deriving much of its plot from *Phantom of the Opera*, with a bit of Dorian Gray thrown in, the movie centers around an attempt by a rock czar to find an original musical score to open his new concert hall. He discovers a massive new rock opera based upon the Faust legend, and steals it from its composer, who takes his revenge by donning a mask and becoming the "Phantom of the Paradise," terrorizing and wreaking vengeance upon one and all. The elaborately staged, catchy rock songs run the gamut from greaseball to glitter. Paul Williams, who wrote the music, is effective and believable as Swan, the omnipotent head of Death Records. William Finley is Winslow Leach, a wimpy, naive composer and a perfect foil for Swan. Jessica Harper is appealing as a deceptively sweet charmer who will do anything to become a superstar. Writer-director Brian De Palma maintains a straightforward story line amidst the dazzling, highly stylized sets and costumes. Rated "PG." **— C.F.B.**

*Paul Williams offers William Finley a contract in PHANTOM OF THE PARADISE.*

• For the first time since the 1960's, Walt Disney Productions has come up with a superior adventure film. **THE ISLAND AT THE TOP OF THE WORLD**, set at the turn of the century, is the story of a determined Englishman whose search for his missing son carries him to an uncharted island in the Arctic Ocean. Arriving in a zeppelin-like balloon, the Englishman and his party of explorers stumble upon a lost colony of Vikings, from whom they must rescue his son. John Whedon's screenplay is intelligent, and paced just slightly too slowly. The special effects, especially toward the end of the film, are spectacular. Best of all, the film presents none of the "cuteness" that has plagued nearly all Disney releases in recent years. Hopefully this movie is the start of a new trend (or the re-emergence of an old one) for Disney. Rated "G." **— C.F.B.**

• **THE KLANSMAN** suffers from terminal *deja vu*. It is a film about gratuitous violence, reminiscent in some ways of Sam Peckinpah's films, but without Peckinpah's style and imagination, which in his best films manages to eroticize violence and exhilarate his audience with the terror and suspense of the mayhem committed on the screen. Although *The Klansman* is rich in murders, rapes and burnings, director Terence Young can barely keep his actors animated. The plot is a tired rehash of racial confrontation in the South. Alabama rednecks, cardboard characters straight out of the magnolia tradition, are portrayed as mindless brutes pitted against poor ignorant blacks and a handful of white liberals who come to town on a voter registration drive. In the midst of the battle are Richard Burton, friend to the oppressed of all colors, taking refuge on his hilltop farm and nursing a third-generation grudge against his townspeople, and Lee Marvin, the sheriff who tries to cool things off and smooth things over by bending laws to keep the country folk from breaking them. All are set upon a course that ends predictably in a shoot-out finale in which Burton comes out of hiding and Marvin is forced to take a stand. It is a situation that has lost its immediacy, in

(continued on page 47)

# reason profile

When Susan Love Brown subscribed to REASON in 1972 she had never even heard the term "libertarian," let alone been an activist. "But after reading the Libertarian Party Platform in REASON I was propelled into action by what seemed to be the clearest statement of what I had seen politically. I wrote an enthusiastic, if not gushy, letter to LP headquarters only to find myself temporary chairman of a nonexistent Kentucky Party. Since then I have become immersed in libertarian theory and have developed along the lines of anarcho-capitalism." The Kentucky LP flourished under her leadership, gaining members and sponsoring such activities as last year's Free Woman's Seminar (see "Frontlines," Feb. 1974). Since moving to California last year, Ms. Brown has become active in San Diego's Libertarian Alternative, as well as in the California and national LP's.

Born and raised in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, the 26-year-old Ms. Brown attended the University of Louisville, where she majored in English and Philosophy. She edited *The Louisville (KY) Defender* newspaper for two years, writing over 300 articles for them. She had a weekly column, "The Libertarian Front," in the University newspaper for one semester and has published in *Fiction* and REASON (see "Rape of the Black Mind," this issue) magazines.

About the only hobby she has time for now is reading — "literature in particular and anything else in general. I am especially interested in reading books that help me to understand people." Favorite authors include Max Eastman (especially *Love and Revolution*), Leon Uris *(Exodus)*, William Faulkner, and Truman Capote; and she is especially interested in the cosmogonical theories of Immanuel Velikovsky. Ms. Brown enjoys writing — her ultimate goal is to be a professional writer. In the performing arts her passion is ballet: she was in a semi-professional ballet company for a short time.

Ms. Brown is currently on the staff of the Campus Studies Institute Division of World Research, Inc. (11722 Sorrento Valley Road, San Diego, CA 92121), an educational organization that promotes free market philosophy among college students and faculty members. "My work at CSI is basically creative — writing (I am a co-editor of CSI's new book, *The Incredible Bread Machine*), helping develop programs and materials, and research. I get a chance to work every day for ideas I believe in."

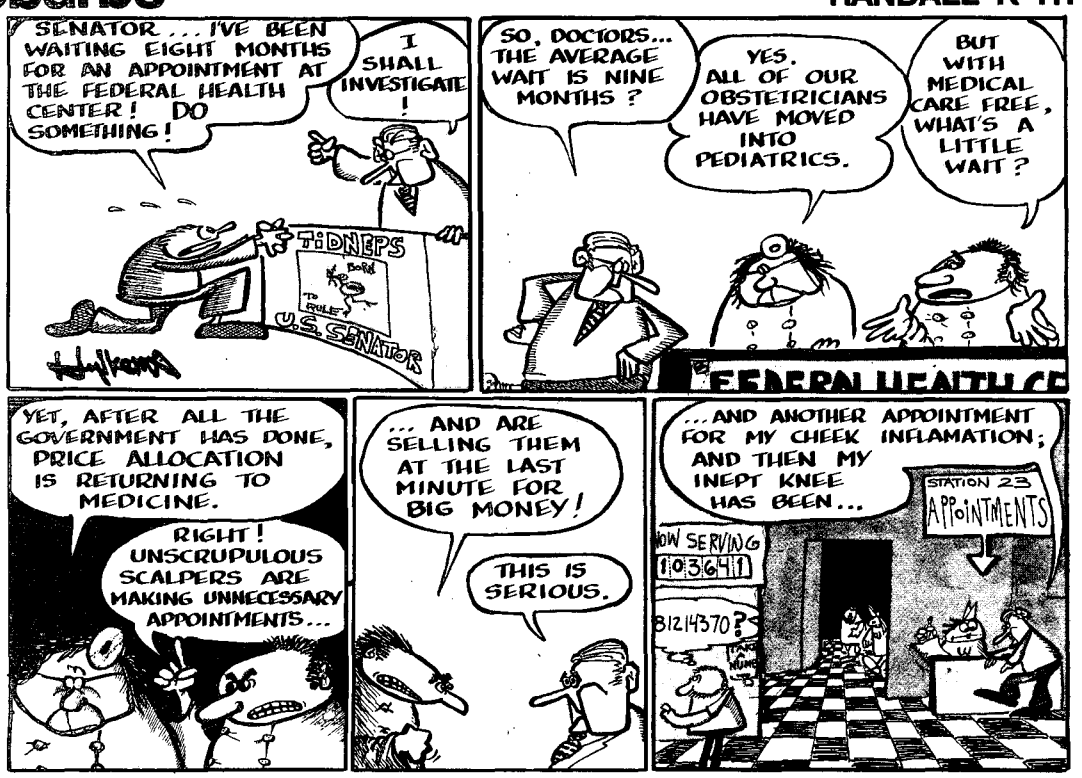
NEIL HEILPERN

SUSAN LOVE BROWN

Ms. Brown's approach to libertarianism is basically educationalist. "I think that a more universal libertarian influence can be achieved only through education, regardless of the methods employed. And I think further investigation into areas like psychology and sociology — in other words, areas which lead to a better human understanding — will divulge a lot of reasons why some people naturally gravitate toward liberty while others shun its responsibilities." ◻

# rudebarbs

## RANDALL K HYLKEMA


SENATOR... I'VE BEEN WAITING EIGHT MONTHS FOR AN APPOINTMENT AT THE FEDERAL HEALTH CENTER! DO SOMETHING!
I SHALL INVESTIGATE!
TIDNEPS
U.S. SENATOR
SO, DOCTORS... THE AVERAGE WAIT IS NINE MONTHS?
YES. ALL OF OUR OBSTETRICIANS HAVE MOVED INTO PEDIATRICS.
BUT WITH MEDICAL CARE FREE, WHAT'S A LITTLE WAIT?
YET, AFTER ALL THE GOVERNMENT HAS DONE, PRICE ALLOCATION IS RETURNING TO MEDICINE.
RIGHT! UNSCRUPULOUS SCALPERS ARE MAKING UNNECESSARY APPOINTMENTS...
... AND ARE SELLING THEM AT THE LAST MINUTE FOR BIG MONEY!
THIS IS SERIOUS.
...AND ANOTHER APPOINTMENT FOR MY CHEEK INFLAMATION; AND THEN MY INEPT KNEE HAS BEEN...
STATION 23 APPOINTMENTS
NOW SERVING 103611
8121437?

# publisher's notes

• **FOCUS ON LIBERTARIANS:** We noted in this column in October the increasing amount of media coverage devoted to libertarians and libertarian ideas. Although the movement has a long way to go before libertarian ideas become generally known and accepted, much progress has been made. The Libertarian Party has been particularly effective in spreading the freedom message, and their recent political campaigns – even if they didn't score as many votes as we'd like (see "Frontlines" in this issue) – have resulted in two significant articles about libertarianism. The November 11 issue of *Newsweek* contains a full-page article, "Every Man for Himself," which describes the libertarian movement in a generally favorable and upbeat commentary.

Featuring an eye-catching photo of a blonde in a body stocking riding Godiva-like along New York's Central Park on a white horse named "Taxpayer," a campaign stunt effectively put on by Jerry Tuccille's campaign for Governor of New York, *Newsweek's* article appeared just after the November 5 elections (too late to help the LP's candidates), but has already brought in a number of new readers to REASON. We are delighted to welcome our new readers to the world of REASON!

The second article resulting from the LP campaign was Nicholas von Hoffman's nationally syndicated column which appeared in the October 25 issue of the *Washington Post.* An astute political commentator, von Hoffman says such nice things about libertarianism that you might think you were reading his column in REASON instead of your local paper. Indeed, it was so good that even *Newsweek* quoted von Hoffman's concluding observation, " 'For the overtaxed, overregulated, overburdened and underpowered millions of the American middle class,' . . . the Libertarians are 'the only people worth voting for.' "

Copies of the *Newsweek* and von Hoffman articles may be obtained from the Libertarian Party, 550 Kearny Street, San Francisco, CA 94108.

• **NEW COLUMN:** REASON contributing editor Mark Frazier has just launched a syndicated column. Called "Town Counsel," it is a weekly feature that shows how cities are saving taxpayers money and improving municipal productivity through such methods as privatization and performance contracting.

"I'm interested in proven successes – such as Scottsdale Arizona's fire department, or the clause in a California city's police contract which gives bonuses to policement when the crime rate falls," says Frazier, who graduated magna cum laude from Harvard last June and has already an impressive listing of journalism credits. "The emphasis is on breakthroughs which can be easily applied in communities across the country."

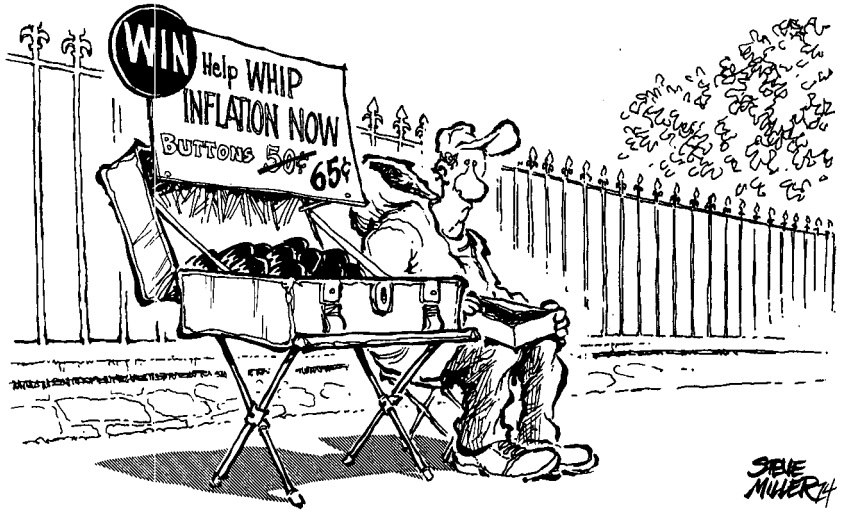
Although the column's libertarian thrust is not explicit, the basic concern is to hold down the rising cost of government at the local level. The column costs less than $3 a week, and is limited to newspapers with paid circulations of less than 50,000. For information and sample copies, write: Town Counsel, 6200 Westchester Park Drive, #1614, College Park, Maryland 20740.

• **BOOK REVIEWER NAMED:** REASON contributor Jeff Riggenbach was recently named Book Reviewer for KFWB All News Radio, a major Los Angeles station. Riggenbach reviews both fiction and nonfiction books from all leading publishers, and frequently selects books of special interest to libertarians. An anchorman for two years on KFWB, Riggenbach is a regular contributor of book reviews and essays to REASON, and was co-editor (with Wendy McElroy) of an excellent literary magazine, *The Castalian.*

• **DANISH TAX RESISTER ON TRIAL:** Mogens Glistrup, leader of Denmark's libertarian-oriented Progress Party, went on trial in Copenhagen on October 7, charged with about 3,000 counts of tax evasion and fraud. Glistrup's two-year-old party is now Denmark's second biggest party and is continuing to increase its support. A successful tax lawyer, Glistrup has said that the trial – which is expected to continue for years – is a political conspiracy against him and his party for its campaign to abolish the income tax.

• **OBSCENE GESTURE ALLOWED:** The Maine Supreme Court ruled in September that "obscene" gestures sometimes fall under protected freedom of expression. In upholding the trial court's dismissal of charges of disturbing the peace against a Maine resident for his allegedly obscene gesture "to the annoyance" of a state trooper, the court stated that "Even crudity of expression may be constitutionally protected." Police officers spend so much time harassing citizens these days (if they're not stopping people from gambling or smoking marijuana, they're out enforcing the "energy-conserving" 55 m.p.h. speed limit), that it's nice to see the Maine Supreme Court's willingness to protect the long-suffering citizen. We wonder what the court would have done if an IRS agent had been involved instead of a policeman. If anyone's interested in getting involved in a test case, we advise you to have your case come up in mid-April.

• **SAFETY AGENCY WITHDRAWS PIN:** The U. S. Consumer Product Safety Commission disclosed on November 15, that it was recalling 80,000 of its own lapel buttons promoting toy safety. The yellow buttons picture a toy brown bear and black lettering proclaiming, "Think Toy Safety." The Commission indicated that the buttons had sharp edges, paint with too much lead content, and clips that could be broken off and swallowed by children. Now, if the Commission could only do something to recall those "WIN" buttons . . . ◻



(continued from page 44)

large part because it was experienced so vividly in the mid-1960's, and the presence of a one-man black vigilante (echoes of *Death Wish*) is not enough to give it new life. Young appears to be as bored by the whole business as the actors. Inspired performances and a competent script might have salvaged the show, but Burton and Marvin plod aimlessly through the film attempting meaningful and profound statements, Burton mumbling unintelligibly at times when his Southern accent seems to get the better of him. There was a time, not so very long ago, when Burton could deliver a performance that would almost redeem an otherwise awful film. If the producers of *The Klansman* were gambling on his repeating this phenomenon, they lost badly. — **James F. Carey**

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# viewpoint

MURRAY N. ROTHBARD

## SEMANTIC TRICKERY AND ECONOMIC HEALTH

Government economists, in the decades since they have taken on the task of ministering to the economy, have become adept at curing our ills by semantic redefinition. We used to suffer from "depressions," but these have long since been redefined out of existence into "recessions." For a while, we were able to tolerate a series of recessions, secure in the knowledge that depressions were a thing of the bad old past. Now, however, "recessions," too, have become an embarrassment to the Establishment, and the Government has tried desperately to find a substitute name that will take hold. A few years ago, it came up with "rolling readjustment," but somehow that just didn't take; recently, the current recession has been dubbed a "sideways waffle." *Anything* to get rid of that dread word. In their search for semantic escape, however, the Government has encountered some problems. In the first place, a hallowed Keynesian definition of recession has been accepted for many years: a decline in "real GNP" for two successive quarters. What to do then, when—in the summer of 1974—it became all too clear that real GNP had indeed declined for those two magic quarters? A holding operation ensued, replete with the assurance that the statistics were a fluke, that the decline in the second quarter was slight, and that the third quarter of 1974 would find the economy booming again. The sharp decline of real GNP in the third quarter of 1974 has put the boots to *that* attempt.

In desperation, the government economists have suddenly rediscovered economic complexity. After decades of slavish concentration on the GNP, they have come to the quick realization that *other* economic indices also matter. We might hail this step as an advance toward reality on the part of economists, were it not for the strong odor of special pleading about the whole affair. At any rate, *that* didn't work either, since the other indicators are now clearly in bad shape as well.

But the semantic strains on our Establishment do not stop there—for a phenomenon which began as a cloud no bigger than a man's hand in the 1958 recession, and was redefined out of existence in the 1965-66 "mini-recession" and the 1969-70 recession, is now too big to ignore: the unwelcome phenomenon of inflationary recession. In each successive recession it has become clear that inflation has proceeded merrily, at an accelerating pace, *even* during recession, an event which violates all the standard and Keynesian canons of what a recession is supposed to look like. While the government has failed conspicuously to alleviate inflationary recession, they have succeeded in coming up with a new name, which conceals the unwelcome condition and makes it sound almost sexy: "stagflation."

Semantics or no, however, the advent of inflationary recession makes a mockery of the Keynesian vaunting of their ability to "fine tune" the economy out of trouble, to steer a careful path between inflation and depression. For the good thing about previous recessions was precisely the *deflation* (the fall in consumer price levels), since through the burdens of recession the consumers could at least benefit from the fall in the cost of living. Now, with their "modern tools," the Government and its economists have managed to eliminate—not recessions, mind you—but the one thing that used to make recessions palatable.

The major reason, of course, for the systematic semantic trickery and denial of reality by the Government (in brief, its *lies*), is to get itself off the hook before the potentially enraged voting public. A corollary reason has been to baby the public along until the problem disappears, after which the public's short historical memory could be counted on to forget the episode. Since recessions are generally short-lived, this strategy could work in the past, but not this time. Furthermore, since inflation has proved to be both persistent and accelerating, no amount of semantic or other evasive juggling has been able to talk *that* problem away. A third, and more respectable reason—an argument that has been advanced to make the lie "noble"—is that the Government is supposed to be inspiring confidence on the part of the public, and that confidence is what is needed to cure our economic problems. But confidence is itself a function of economic reality, and has no independent force of its own. Furthermore, the public tends on its own to be confident of economic prosperity until reality forces that confidence to ebb and disappear. An end to rising prices would do far, far more to restore public confidence in victory over inflation than any amount of gaseous verbiage emitted by our rulers. Furthermore, lies reap their own reward, and the credibility of Government is now happily at its lowest ebb in modern American history. What America needs most desperately for its economic health is for the Government to disappear into some rabbit-hole: to stop doing and stop talking. Only then will we achieve that prosperity without inflation that the Government has been promising for so long. ◻

*Murray Rothbard is professor of economics at the Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn. Dr. Rothbard's viewpoint appears in this column every third month, alternating with the viewpoints of Tibor Machan and David Brudnoy.*

# letters

## ON DISBARMENT

In your October 1974 Editorial on disbarment, you appealed to my sense of fairness, but offended my sense of justice and left me with mixed emotions. After the emotions subsided, I now have a couple of comments regarding the points you raised.

*First,* men are not forced into becoming attorneys; they choose to do so. Before they make that choice they are told and advised again and again that any violation against a specific, written code of professional ethics will lead to an irrevocable cancellation of their right to practice law. Since this is the contract made beforehand, if a prospective attorney does not wish to agree to those conditions, he can seek another profession. (Whether or not this should or should not be a condition of becoming an attorney is another topic.)

*Second,* it is not the various states that are disbarring Nixon, Agnew, and the remainder of the Waterbuggers, but rather it is being proposed and done so by their own professional associations. These honorable members do not want to associate or be connected professionally with obstructors of justice, bribers, buggers, liars, etc. and are acting to protect their own good names and the reputation of their professional bar associations. (The fact that this independent, voluntary action has the effect of the offenders losing their State licenses to practice law is the by-product of government intervention, which is again another subject.)

*Third,* you stated that in a free society, disbarment would not deprive an attorney of his right to practice law because it would merely mean he would no longer be a member of the association that certified him. In a free society, can you imagine anyone seeking the services of an uncertified attorney? Can you imagine the judge in a court supported voluntarily by a free market society even allowing a disbarred attorney in the room as a spectator, much less as a counselor? Can you imagine the types of people who, in a free society, would seek out the services of an attorney who had been disbarred for bribery, illegal bugging, and obstruction of justice? So, even in a free society, decertification would certainly be tantamount to the loss of one's license in our present bureaucratic jungle. In point of fact, I submit that it is only in the present state of affairs that all the Watergate participants will probably be able to get their licenses back in a very short time by doing the same things that got them disbarred in the first place.

**Carl Rodgers**
**San Diego, CA**

**MR. KLAUSNER replies:** Mr. Rodgers' letter completely misses the point of my Editorial. The questions which he sidesteps concerning the propriety of Government's power to license occupations and restrict an individual's right to make a living in the marketplace are the fundamental issues confronted in the Editorial. I refer readers to my Editorial rather than repeat my arguments here. Under a certification system, consumers would be free to select the attorney of their choice, whether or not the attorney is a member of a voluntary bar association. In the use of its licensing power, Government has disbarred attorneys for such conduct as drinking liquor (during prohibition) and has refused to allow pacifists to practice law if they would not take an oath to bear arms, even where the applicants were otherwise found to be loyal citizens who were qualified to practice law.

I agree with Mr. Rodgers that decertification might be tantamount to the loss of one's license to the extent that decertification were based on substantial grounds. But even if he doesn't accept my other arguments (against licensing and disbarment) as put forth in the Editorial, I can't see why Mr. Rodgers' "sense of justice" would oppose a system of certification that would allow consumers to select a competent attorney who happens to be a pacifist or has been observed with a joint or a bottle of gin. — **M.S.K.**

## CLEARING UP

In a recent REASON interview [August 1974], I talked in depth about my fight against psychosurgery, involuntary mental hospitalization and other forms of psychiatric reform projects in which I had cooperated with the Church of Scientology.

Since the publication of the interview, some individuals have wondered if I endorse the practices of the Church of Scientology, and so I want to make clear that I do *not* endorse them. I also want to let REASON readers know that I have had increasing experience with the Church of Scientology since I first gave that interview many months ago, and I have come to the conclusion that their views and mine on liberty are too dissimilar to warrant my continued co-operative efforts with them. I therefore no longer lend my name to projects sponsored by the Church of Scientology.

**Peter R. Breggin, M.D.**
**Washington, DC**

## PURITY

I find myself in basic agreement with Bruce Ramsey's stand on "libertarian conservatives" as presented in the letters section of the October REASON. There is a danger of losing our singular intellectual identity if we become careless about the distinction between conservatives and libertarians. David Brudnoy who calls himself a libertarian while reasoning from a definitely conservative position is a case in point.

Presenting an avant-garde front to the public is important, but not at the expense of sound philosophy. Dr. Szasz may engender an impressive public image but philosophically he seems to have gotten lost somewhere around A is A. His lack of objective definitions leaves a good deal to be desired.

While it is true that many libertarians seem hard put to shake off conservative cultural ties they have their counterparts in those who accept with open arms the latest liberal-sanctioned social opinions. These individuals so hell bent on revolutionizing everything are ready, to use an old cliche, to throw the baby out with the bath water.

Rand, indeed, in many ways is a source of embarrassment because she often violates her own principles, but Rothbard's tactic is different. Rather than advocating beer drinking, pro football, or big cars he was defending the right of the individual to decide what makes him happy, and to enjoy it.

Mr. Ramsey separates himself from reality when he defends bicycles as solutions to the transportation problem and sounds almost authoritarian in his attack on the gas "guzzling" automobile, as if it were some evil monster robbing unwilling victims of their share of the public supply of gasoline.

There is a touch of naivete in Mr. Ramsey's letter—as if he believed the liberal slogans about merely searching for a solution to energy and population problems. Yet Rand, despite her opposition to legal remedies to pollution-caused destruction, has shown very clearly the mentality of many of the liberal "environmentalists" and other assorted technology haters.

# Reason's Letter of the Month

The letter below, by subscriber Paul Pensyl, appeared in the October 11, 1974 issue of *The Sharon (Mass.) Advocate:*

**VOLUNTARY TAXATION**

*Well, I've received my property tax for this year. And, like most everybody else, I don't like it.*

*But I would like to explain why I don't like it and perhaps gain some agreement.*

*I think it is fairly obvious that the number of ways that an individual (or group of individuals) can acquire material wealth are limited. Material wealth can be earned, it can be a gift or it can be coercively taken.*

*I am among those who would regard it moral to earn one's own wealth and certainly morally consistent to have the right to give things away— when the giving is voluntary.*

*It is simply wrong to use force in dealing with people: it is wrong to draft them into an army; it is wrong to throw them into jail for practicing the freedom of speech; it is wrong to tax them. In fact, it is simply wrong to abridge the freedom of anyone as long as what one does does not infringe the rights of others.*

*Now I am not going to suggest that we abolish taxes at this point in our history. But I would like to point out that coercive taxation IS morally wrong. It is wrong not because of how the money is spent (though it can be) but because it is taken by means of physical force. (And, if you don't believe this, don't pay your taxes this year and see what happens.)*

*We are going to continue to have taxes and I know this. We could, however, make the crime of taxation a little less immoral. Let me give a personal example. I am single yet three-fifths of my property tax is going towards public education. That's a lot of something for nothing. There are others in this town who probably would like to, or already do, send their children to a private school. (Who could blame them?) But still, they too are forced to pay for something which they either are not getting or would prefer not to have.*

*I am in business and I know how people behave when you can't explain every item on their bill. Some people get fighting mad when they are erroneously overcharged by twenty cents! This is characteristic in a free market.*

*What about our government(s), however. Consider the thousands the average individual has to pay out and never, that is, NEVER see his individual tax bill(s) itemized. This is characteristic of government financing by forced taxation.*

*I submit, then, that every tax paying citizen ought to press for the following two proposals in order that we make our taxation less immoral: first, every tax paying citizen ought to receive individually itemized tax bills; second, that each individual ought to be invoiced (taxed) only for those services that he wants and is getting. Payment to all other government ventures ought to be made optional.*

**Paul Pensyl**
**Sharon, MA**

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In this regard I would caution against contaminating libertarianism with unsound ideology of any sort, liberal as well as conservative.

**Steven D. Kimball**
**Port Angeles, WA**

**CULTURAL CONSERVATIVES**

I found a disturbing preoccupation with surface "images" in Mr. Bruce Ramsey's letter which appeared in the October issue. I for one have on occasion enjoyed an afternoon drinking beer and watching football, I have spent a good portion of my youth riding around in '63 and '64 Chevy Impalas and to make matters worse I even dig 1950's rock and roll. I have no intention of presenting myself as a member of "an intelligent and imaginative avant-garde" if this means, as Mr. Ramsey seems to imply, that I must drink only the best wines, ride an English ten-speed bicycle, grow a moustache, attend the opera, smoke a pipe etc. etc. ad nauseum. I use the phrase ad nauseum not because I find these traits by themselves disturbing but because I find the prospect of myself faking them for the benefit of those who might be impressed, quite literally nauseating. It seems both strange and ironic for a believer in individual liberty to be telling me how I must "present myself" in order to further the cause of freedom. I hope I have not misinterpreted Mr. Ramsey's meaning of the phrase "intelligent and imaginative avant-garde." I attach this meaning because he excludes both Murray Rothbard and Ayn Rand from his "avant-garde" not on intellectual but on cultural grounds. I am forced to conclude that he attaches a cultural meaning to the phrase which of course it does not possess. If the phrase were understood properly as "those leading a movement" (in this case an *intellectual* movement) I would have no objection, indeed I would feel honored to be considered part of the "avant-garde."

If some people conclude from my personal tastes that I am "Mr. Conservative" and a hate all "niggers," "hippies," "ecology nuts," "womens libbers," etc. that is their problem. Mr. Ramsey points out that we must attract the "right kind of people." These are not people who are impressed by "images." As far as I am concerned if a person has a rational mind and uses it honestly, it doesn't matter whether he lives in a split-level in the suburbs or a loft on MacDougal Street. I don't think it's too much to ask of potential libertarians to exhibit the same attitude.

Mr. Rothbard only brought up the subject at all in order to expose the fact that The Left uses this absurd criteria for judging people. We should not come out in favor of automobiles and against bicycles but in favor of what might be termed "cultural blindness" just as, and for the same reasons, Ayn Rand advocates "color blindness" in matters of race relations.

I strongly urge that we do not adopt the irrational tactics of our enemies by concerning ourselves with images rather than ideas. Mr. Ramsey ends his letter with the statement, "If it is unfortunately true that libertarians often appear" (to whom he does not specify) "to be crackpots or conservatives the answer is that many of them probably are." In other words he offers the opinions of those who judge on the basis of appearances as proof that many libertarians are "crackpots and conservatives." I say the opinions of such people prove nothing and are not worthy of discussion. Equally unworthy of our attention are "cultural behavior patterns" or "images." If Mr. Ramsey wishes to attack those libertarians which he considers "conservative" on an intellectual level, he should direct his efforts to that and only that. To attack them on cultural grounds is irrational and also unfair in that it presupposes a largely nonexistant correlation between cultural behavior and ideology. In other words, it is blind, irrational prejudice.

**Charles Irwin**
**Hoboken, NJ**

**Letters from readers are welcome. Each receives editorial consideration, although only a selection can be published and none individually acknowledged. They should be kept as brief as possible and are subject to condensation. Letters submitted for publication in this column should be typed, double-spaced. Send letters to REASON, P.O. Box 6151, Santa Barbara, CA 93111.**

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### THE FLAVOR OF BFL

Here is a brief list to give you an idea of the stature of a few reviews that have appeared in our pages:

| *Reviewer* | *Title and Author* |
|---|---|
| John Chamberlain | THE YOUNG MENCKEN by Carl Bode ($10) |
| Arthur A. Ekirch | AMERICAN LIBERALISM AND WORLD POLITICS by James J. Martin ($22.50) |
| Hans J. Eysenck | RACE by John R. Baker ($15) |
| Henry Hazlitt | UNDERSTANDING THE DOLLAR CRISIS by Percy L. Greaves, Jr. ($7) |
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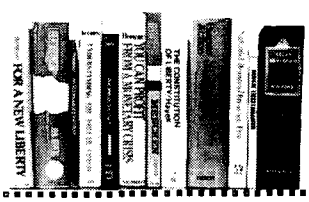


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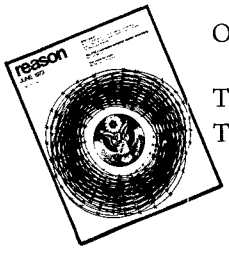


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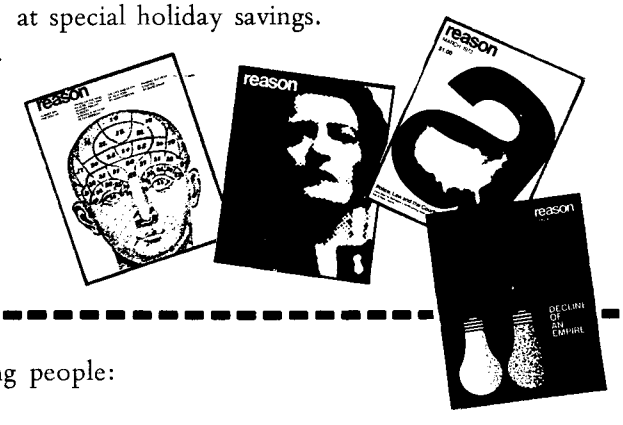


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